

WILFULL

30

# IMPENITENCY

THE GROSSEST

## SELF-MURDER.

All they who are guilty of it, apprehended, tried, and condemned in these SERMONS.

Preached at Rochford in Essex not long before his death, by that able, faithful, and laborious Minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. William Fenner, B. D. and made publique by one of his unworthy fellow-labourers

Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. *Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh*

John 5. 40, 43. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own Name, him you will receive.*

*Velle meum Domine misericordia tale est de redeundo ulte, quale est velle tuum de mea ad te reversione. Guil. Paris. de Rhetor. D. v. c. 14.*

*Quid agit liberum? Breviter respondeo, saluatur.*

*Bern. de Lib. Arb. & Gr.*

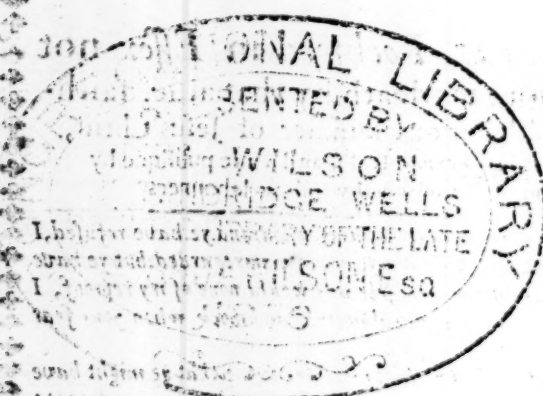
*Non velle in causa est, non posse pretenditur. Sen.*

The fifth Edition.

London, Printed for J. Rothwell, at the Fountain in Goldsmiths-row in Cheapside. 1638.

WILLIAM  
 FINCH  
 1771  
 RICHARD

of the City of London  
 Librarian of the British Museum  
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at the church of St. Andrew

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To the right Honourable

Robert Rich, Baron of Leeze in

Essex, and Earl of Warwick:

Abundance of spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ.

**P**aul being upon a propheticall wing, (for the Lord had poured upon him, not only an Apostolical, but a Propheticall spirit) doth foretell in 2 Tim. 3. 1. *This know also (saith he) there's the insal- lible certainty of it.* That in the last days, perilous times should come; those who are full of carnal self-love and unthankfulness, will much encrease the danger of this last age of the World; (the Lord root up all such weeds out of our hearts.)

God hath, I hope, given your Honour such a measure of love to the publique, and so active a spirit to do good to others, as will help to lessen the danger of these evil times. And I would be so thankfull for favours received, that I might not be ranked among this dishonourable Catalogue which here Paul sums up, of such as make bad times worse.

It is your Honours happiness and advantage, (as it was once said of the Duke

## The Epistle

of Guise in France, that he did put obligations upon all) that you can engage very many and amongst the rest, I must ever acknowledge my self one, who in one of the greatest turnings of my life, by the good hand of God upon me in your free consent and Noble bounty have had so much comfort, in the neereſt and deereſt relation, that I never envied any other, but finde matter of everlasting praises to God for his goodness to my self therein. And being under ſo great obligations, when I can produce nothing of my own worthy your acceptance, take leave to act the part of a Midwife to this happy Birth which may call your Honour Father, as will appear by the following Letter, that it was ultimately intended for your ſpiritual advantage; and it were now a kind of ſacrilege to keep the holy iſſue from you that is ſo much your own. It joyes the ſouls of me and many more of your praying ſervants, that they have ſo much occaſion to praise their God on your behalf, for ſo many able and faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, of the firſt, ſecond and third magnitude, that your prudent, ſoberly care hath fixed, where you as Patron have been truſted.

On the many Chariots and Horſemen of Iſrael, that your Noble Father and you have

## Dedicatory.

have brought triumphantly into Essex,  
(herein you did happily *Patrizare*) the  
Lord continue the like care to build and  
repair his House in those who survive you  
from generation to generation, that so your  
House may still be honourably supported.

*Ecclesiastical* Story speaks of one *Henri-*  
*cus Auceps*, when he did fight against the  
*Hungarians*, made this vow to God, That if  
the Lord would give him victory against his  
enemy, he would purge his Country from *Sim-*  
*ony*, which at that time mightily aboun-  
ded therein. We want men of such an he-  
roical zealous disposition in England.

Oh that all *Patrons* were more mindfull  
of their high trust; then they would not  
so often betray the souls of people by  
putting off a friend, &c. with a Living to  
some unworthy Chaplain. Doubtless there  
is many a damned creature roaring in Hell,  
cursing covetous *Patrons* as well as unfaith-  
full *Pastors*; for whose Blood (in part at  
least) they must be accountable to the  
Father of spirits, and Judge of quick and  
dead. A most heavy reckoning, when the  
sins of so many Congregations, to which  
*Patrons* are accessary by sending ignorant  
and scandalous Ministers amongst them,  
are made theirs; whereas the least of their  
own sins unrepented of, will sink them eter-  
nally.

## The Epistle



God who is faithfull, will not forget your labour and cost of love to the truly reverend man of God, Mr. Hooker, (who is now singing Hallelujahs in Heavenly Mansions) when he was persecuted by the \* *Archi-flamen* of Canterbury. He will pay abundantly for the protecting and nursing his Children, *Heb. 6. 10.*

\* There are many of great reading who will

underrake to make it appear, that as Heathenish feasts *Bacchanalia* & *Saturnalia*, &c. were turned into Christmas, and such other feasts, hoping thereby to win Heathens to Christ: so were *Archi-flamens*, and *Flamens* changed into *Arch-prelates*, and *Prelates*, out of a good intention.


I know not how better to express my deep sense of your most real favour (the comfort whereof I daly injoy) than by taking the humble boldness to beseech your Honour to add one thing more, which indeed is the *unum necessarium*, whereby you will gain that better part, which shall not be taken from you; Namely, that you would study and pray that you may walk in the light and heat of that glorious Gospel-Constellation (for Ministers are Stars, and the \* *Angels of the Churches*) which you have endeavoured to fix in your Orb. Your Honour hath been so often at Sea, and there beholding the won-

Luke 10.  
42.

Rev. I 20.

\* So acknowledged by the Translators in the contents

of the second Chapter of the Revelation. They, it seems, did not think these Angels to be Prelates.



## Dedicatory.

ders of God in the deep, have been taught to wrestle with him for mercy. It is an old saying, he that would learn to pray, let him go to Sea. Besiege Heaven with your unwearied importunities, that the Ark of the Gospel, which you have provided for thousands, may be your own everlasting Sanctuary. And that your feasting upon their dainties, may be fat and flourishing in your last dayes; standing stedfast in these shaking times, and immoveable, keeping Faith and a good Conscience, (which too many having put away concerning Faith, have made shipwrack) more and more abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

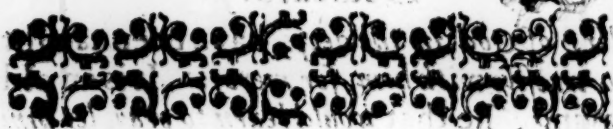
*Qui nescit orare discat navigare. Jonah 1. 3.*

This through the grace of Christ,  
shall be the earnest prayer of  
him who is,

My Lord,

Your Honours most obliged servant,

THOMAS HILL.



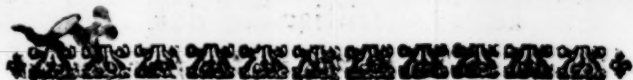
TO  
The Right Worshipfull my much  
Honoured friend,  
Sir NATHANIEL RICH.

**I** Have been often thinking what to send to you ;  
at last this Theme which I have lately treated of  
in the Pulpit came into my minde; its of infinite  
use and necessity, and a truth little examined, con-  
sidered, or layed to heart, yet marvellous necessary for  
humiliation to all the children of God, and of great  
weight for the making the world guilty before  
God. I had thought to have sent it to my Lord of  
Warwick for his subciseive hours ; and if you judge  
it profitable, after your perusal of it , to commit it  
unto him for me, you shall do well. I am sorry to  
hear of such a Worshipp's sickness or weakness. Now  
Elisha the man of God was fallen sick ; the very  
words are able to strike through. The Lord lend you  
health and strength, and peace, and comforts, and joy;  
it is not only matter of courtesie to pray for such  
as you are, but of debt, and our very necessities and  
duties call for it, and mine more especially. The Lord  
be mercifull to me, and to many in raising you up,  
and make you plenus dierum , and serus in coelum  
redire, that's all the heart that I wish you; And so I  
commend you to the word of his power that is able to  
keep you, and rest

2 King 13.  
14.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

WILLIAM FENNER.



To the Christian Reader, who de-  
sireth to hold fast the form of sound  
words in faith and love, which is in  
Christ Jesus; and to advance Free-grace  
above Free-will.

**M**ost admirably wise and fatherly  
hath been the Lords care of his  
Churches in all ages; & when there  
were false Prophets under the old Testa-  
ment, the Lord had his Jeremiahs to con-  
fute them, whom he made a defenced City,  
an Iron pillar, and brazen wall against all  
opposition. When the Devil stirred up Hy-  
meneus, Philetus, and others, to undermine  
the truths of the Gospel, in the times of the  
New Testament, the Lord raised and accom-  
plished his Paul, to confound them. You shall  
finde when the Churches of Christ are in  
a wilderness-condition, and the Serpent  
cast out of his mouth waters as a flood, after  
the woman, that is, multitudes of unsound  
and Heretical opinions, the earth helped the  
woman, and opened her mouth, and swal-  
lowed the flood which the Dragon cast out  
of his mouth: that is, Jesus Christ had those  
here that did encounter and overthrow all  
false Doctrine, with which the Devil by his  
agents endeavoured to poyson and destroy the  
Churches.

Jer. 1. 18.

1 Tim. 1.  
20.

Rov. 12.  
15, 16.

See lear-  
ned Mr.  
Mede in  
his excel-  
lent Book  
on the  
place.

## To the Christian Reader.

1. About  
A.D. 330.  
under  
Constantin  
the great  
viceroy.

*Churches. Thus it was in the four general Councils, namely, that of Nice, when Arrius a Presbyter of Alexandria denying that the Son of God was consubstantial with the Father, and asserting that there was a time when he was not, was confuted, and truth obtained a victory there, God stirring up many learned men to oppose him.*

2. About  
A. D. 384  
under The-  
od. sius.

*And in the second, that of Constantino-ple, when there was a Macedonius who called the Holy Ghost a creature, many were able by the power of truth to confound him.*

3. About  
A.D. 499.  
under The-  
odosius the  
second,  
nor 510-  
762.  
but 481-  
528.

*And the third, when a Nestorius who denied that the Virgin Mary could be called the mother of God, providence ordered it so that then a Council of learned Bishops and Elders at Ephesus should blast that opinion.*

About A.  
D. 456.  
under  
Marrianus  
Calcedon.

*And when an Eutiches (who in a different way from Nestorius, denied the personal Union of two Natures in Christ) would have the immensity of the Divine nature in Christ, and that there was only the Divine nature in him, another Council at Calcedon overthrew him.*

Cent. 3.

*Thus God had variety of Champions to contest with the most subtle and prevailing adversaries, from hand to hand; particularly, when there was Manes & Manichæi, who rejected the old Testament, and affirmed that man fell not by voluntary defection, but of necessity, because*

 To the Christian Reader.

because mans body was made of the Prince of darkness (wherewith Austin was leavened before his conversion) The Lord had Chrysostom and others to hinder the spreading and prevailing of it.

When there was an Arrius, who denied the Divinity of Christ, there should be an Athanasius raised to overthrow him. Cent. 4.

When a Macedonius to oppose the Holy Ghost, then a Basil to break him. Cent. 5.  
Dempsterus  
ex Walsfildâ

When a Pelagius to advance Free-will into the Throne of Free-grace, then God would raise up an Austin, (that great light of the Church in his time) to depose that, and to restore this to its crown and dignity. resert eodem die  
quo ille in Anglia natus, tenebras errorum toti mundo effudit sumum Ecclesie lumen Augustinum in Africa emicuisse.

This Pelagius was born in Britain the same day that Austin in Africk, he was the first presumptuous advancer of the pride of Free-will. He did not think the grace of God to be necessary for the helping of Free-will, for good things in every act. This was condemned in the council of Carthage, wherein indeed to save himself he did equivocate in the word grace, acknowledging a natural, an exciting, and after conversion an assisting grace. This Doctrine was likewise condemned in the Synod of Palestina, 1200 years agoe, and therein Arminianism kild before it was born, by the strength of that place, About A. D. 418.

Note.  
equivocate in the word grace, acknowledging a natural, an exciting, and after conversion an assisting grace. This Doctrine was likewise condemned in the Synod of Palestina, 1200 years agoe, and therein Arminianism kild before it was born, by the strength of that place, Dannata antequam nata Arminii opinio.

2 Tim. 1.9.

This

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*This Pelagius had his Scholars, Julianus and Cælestinus. Jesus Christ would not then leave Austin without some Disciples to conflict with those (as Chrysostome had his Oecumenius, and Theophilact his Pedisequi, his followers) so was there a Prosper, and Hilary Arelatenfis, to encounter the old Massilians, and Semipelagians in France.*

*Vide learned Anthon's most excellent discourse of Free grace in his answer to the Jesuits challenge.*

*About A. D. 529.*

*And when there was a Faustus Regiensis (a most subtil adversary), a Bishop who did closely defend Pelagianism in two Books of Free-will; The Church should have a Fulgentius, and Petrus Diaconus, and others to oppose him. A sentence was then given against Pelagius and Semi-pelagians, in the Council of Orenge; In the general, that their opinions touching free will and free grace, were not agreeable to the Catholick faith.*

*Farther, about the year 850, one Johannes Scorus (not he which wrote upon the Sentences with so much opposition against Thomas Aquinas, but another) wrote a Book against Predestination, which the Church of Leyden consulted with a godly and learned book.*

*When Gottschalcus, about the year 849. spoke of Predestination perilously, to wit, That*

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That those who were predestinated to life by the decree of Gods predestination were forced to do well: and those who were predestinated to condemnation, were forced by the decree of God to do evil, he was resisted by Hincmarus and other learned men.

This infectious error Pelagianism spread in England, where it was apt to take the deeper rooting, because Pelagius himself by birth was a Britain: But the Lord raised learned Bradwardine Arch-Bishop of Canterbury and some others to appear in the cause of God and of free-grace, and to fortifie the Churches against all Pelagian, whom Augustine calls *Inimicos gratiae dei*; and Fulgentius, *Vasa itæ dei*.

Afterwards the subtilty of the Serpent insinuated himself into the Garden of the Church by the wit and learning of Faustus Socinus (another Infaustus Faustus in Poland;) They who have opportunity to consult Socinus books *de Ministerio*, and the *Catechismus Cracoviensis* (a most subtil and dangerous book) shall finde there the seeds of Arminianism, their Helena, there to be conceived (however Molina and other Popish Authors contend, as once the seven Cities did whose Homer was) their *Media Scientia*. They will grant a *Divina Præsentia*, but deny

## To the Christian Reader.

*Peltius  
his har-  
mony of  
Socin. and  
Armin.  
Note,*

*deny decretum Divinum to passe upon all things, leaving the will to it self to produce its own acts, which indeed is no less than a degree of Atheism, setting up the second cause into the Throne of the first. Herein, and in divers other things the Arminians do tread in their steps, as will appear to those who examine Peltius his book, the Harmony of the Socinian and Arminians Doctrine. I wish that book were in English; it would make many blush now adays to see how incogitantly (I hope that is the worst in many) they have run themselves into the Tents of Socinians and Arminians, and know not how honourably to retreat.*

*Vide Mr.  
Prins  
Antiarmin*

*About the year 1570. when Petrus Baro a French man, had infected Cambridge with that disease from France, (you see spiritual as well as bodily evils have come from France) and one Mr. Barret, who acted concurrently with him: but then God giving the Heads of Colleges with the Vicechancellor a prudent zeale to oppose it, they sent up Dr. Tindal and Dr. Whitaker, to complain to Arch-Bishop Whitgift, which begot that Usefull Book of Articuli Lambethani.*

*\*Soon  
after this  
journey*

*Dr. Whitakers blessed soul returned to her eternal rest, having not long before in an admirable concio ad clerum, (rightly called his Cygnaea Cantio) discovered and confuted the chief points of Arminianism.*

*The*

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*The Leaven came then into the Netherlands, and (as learned King James Smith) Arminius was the first that infected Leyden with the Pelagian Heresie\*. He was a* \* Pelagianism oft called Heresie. Vide Dr. Featly's preface to his Pelag. Red.  
*strong and clear parted man; and as it is said of Origen, Ubi bene, nemo melius; ubi male: nemo pejus. so there are some excellent discourses in his Workes, and others as desperately opposite to the Covenant of Grace, spattering all the links of the Golden chain of our salvation, which is the great evil of Arminianism. From a young student, Junius presaged of him, that he would be a very usefull, or most pernicious instrument in the Church of Christ. By this Junius (when the Lord had converted him from Atheism, by reading the beginning of the first Chapter of the Gospel of John, wherein he saw such majesty, that he thought that the Lord did therein detonare ab alto) the Lord gave a sovereign antidote to his Church in those parts, against the infection of Arminianism. As about the same time, by that glorious light, Mr. Perkins, in England, whom the Lord made a Mallens both of papists and Arminians, and by more clear and condescending discoveries of Christ, made the deep mysteries of speculative, and the heavenly secrets of practical Divinity, to meet in the Pulpit; and*

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and all this in a little time; (for he lived but about 44. years, being born (ni fallor) in the first, and dyed in the last of Queen Elizabeths Reign. Oh how much did he in a little time?

But still the Devil will be casting weeds into Christs garden, picking up those that have been rooted out, and throwing them over the wall again.

Now he made use of Barnevelt in Holland to bring Religion to serve State purposes, and so carried on the Arminian design there. These differences about the power of Free-will, and such things as hang upon that (for there is the primum movens) now came to be reduced to five Articles, which began the conference at Hage, bewixt both parties; which is reported both by Brandius and Bertius.

As the name Protestants given first to the Princes free Cities of Germany that sought Reformation in the Diet at Spiro, A. D. 1529 and from them passed to us and other countries where it was effected.

About this time came up the name of Remonstrants, as the name Protestant had formerly. Whereupon Dr. Ames (once Fellow of Christs College in Cambridge, but in Dr. Charies time then Master of that place, it grew too hot for him, he not complying with the present ceremonies, and having preached a Sermon at the University Church against playing at cards which would not then be born) was by the disposing hand of divine Providence carried into those

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those parts, where (as the Austin of that time and place he did grapple with all the Patrons of Freewill. And as an Appendix to that conference at Hage, (as it is set forth by Brandius) writ that most excellent book of his Coronis. But still A minius his disciples acted to their utmost: Bertius, Grevincovius, and others so distracted those Churches, that there was a necessity of calling a Synod, which God gave them as a happy remedy, An. Dom. 1618.

Synod of  
Dort. A. D.  
1618.

Oh the unwearied activity of adversaries to the cause of Christ! (which should make others blush to move so heavily in asserting the Doctrine of Free-grace) before we could understand what the Anti-remonstrants in the Synod at Dort fully intended, we had from the Remonstrants Acta Synodalia, a book indeed that required an Ames to answer it (which he hath done most learnedly) where you have Magnum in Parvo, a great soul in a little body, a great deal of form in a little matter (as in his Bellarminus enervatus) that being done by the Fraternity with concurrent endeavours and quintessence of the best wits amongst the Remonstrants.

About the year 1627. Mr. Montague, a man of great learning, and being backed by the then potent D. of Buckingham, opened

B

his

## To the Christian Reader.

his Arminian ( and I had almost said Popish ) pack, when the Lord used Bishop Carleton, Doctor Featly, Doctor Preston, and others, as happy Instruments to discover his adulterate wares.

Lately there sprung a new brood of such as did assert Arminianism, as Dutch Tompson fellow of Clare-Hall, Mr. Will. Chappel fellow of Christ Coll. (as the many Pupills that were Arminianiz. under his tuition (whether by him or no, he best knows) but men are more confirmed in their suspicion hereof, since they heard of his answerable actings in the University in Irel.) but still as in Oxford, when there was any danger of spreading Armin. whether in Acts, Books, or Sermons, they had there Robert Abbot, Twisse, Prideaux, & other worthies to suppress them: So in Cambridge God gave us lately Davenant & Ward, who did victoriously enter the lists with the most confident Adversaries of Freegrace. And that bitter weed could never take deep rooting in any of these three kingdoms, & thrive very fruitfully. There was in Ireland a most learned Arch-Bishop Usher to crush it there, And a mighty Man in these Controversies, Doctor Twisse (another Austine) to suppress it in England; As learned & industrious Mr. Rutherford and others have done their part

suc

who  
were *astr*  
prime  
magnitudi-  
nis.

## To the Christian Reader.

*successfully in Scotland. But alas Arminius now appears amongst us, not so much in the Schools and Pulpits, as in Popular meetings.*

*For as Zanchius complained with much regret of the Lutheran Ubiquitaries, that he found them ubique, every where to vex and molest him; so may we grieve, (O that we<sup>2 Tim. 2 24.</sup> could with brokenness of heart bewail it) that our Universalists, are almost universally spread amongst us; It is gotten into our Netherlands, much in the fennish and moorish parts of this Kingdom, yea amongst many people that love Jesus Christ, and therefore entertain it, as conceiving it most for his Honour (the more are they to be pittied, and to be instructed with a spirit of a meekness; shew them by Scripture-evidence this is not Gods way of advancing Christ, and you recover them) it is now in popular hands, we need such worthies as the Author of this following Treatise (blessed be the Father of mercy, the Fountain of every good and perfect gift, for his and many others fruitfull labours) who may cōdescend to parley with poor Christians at their Tables, in their shops, to follow them at the plow (as Reverend Mr. Greenham was wont to do) endeavouring to rectifie and reduce them.*

*He knew how to deal wisely with subtile adversaries*

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versaries, that he might have the more advantage against them; grants them as much as he could with consistency to his own principles, that so he might the more easily confound theirs; only you will be so candid as to consider that herein he speaks ad populum; And therefore (as the antient Fathers,) often useth the liberty of speaking like a Preacher rather than as a Doctor of the Chair.

I reckon this a very strong argument to confute the power of Freewill to any spiritual action in a gracious manner, the wo-  
full experience of mine own wretched heart, being naturally so desperately wicked, opposite to any spiritual good. But this will not convince others; only by the way I would know how it comes to pass, if Arminius Doctrine be true, that we have Freewill to chuse that which is truly good, why Arminians are not all very good men? Will not this be an aggravation against them at the dreadful day of judgement?

Note

Therefore the Lord is most admirably gracious in giving us such Masters of the Assemblies to fasten such Scripture-truths as may hold us fast and close under the Covenant of Grace.

He was a blessing to the College where he was fellow, of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge

## To the Christian Reader.

bridge ( which hath been a fruitfull nursery to this Church, and an ornament to the University ) and after a burning and shining light in Staffordshire. He delighted much in preaching in an Evangelical way, from place to place, as pittying many poor pining seduced souls under blinde and superstitious Ministers. The Lord fill their hearts with compassion to them, who have power in their hands to supply them, that so millions do not perish for want of vision.

Afterwards the noble Earl of Warwick fixed him at Rochford in Essex, where he did speak & do great things to the honor of Free Grace. He lived there more by acting vigorously to his great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in a few years, than most of us his Brethren do in many.

O that we who are left behinde in these conflicting times, could more punctally and closely follow his example. It is not studying the groundless fopperies of Popery, nor the immersing our minds wholly into some dry disputes concerning some externals and forms about Religion, (as too many do now adayes being engaged in a party) that will spiritualize us or our hearts, so much as Studying and Preaching over the Covenant of Grace; The Mystrious and heavenly secrets of the Gospel right-

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*ly opened and wisely applyed, will by Gods blessing breed a Gospel-Spirit in thee, leave a gracious tincture upon the spirits of Teachers and Hearers; whereas possibly for want of this, there may be a legal tartness and severity in the Spirits and Tongues of able and good men.*

*The gracious and powerfull Lord who only teacheth to profit, annoint all his Saints with that holy unction, that they may be able to discern of things that differ, clearly to distinguish betwixt truth and error. And that he may to this and other happy purposes, bless abundantly this favourly acute and solid Treatise, shall be the earnest Prayer of him*

**Who is thine in and for  
the Lord Jesus,**

**THOMAS HILL.**

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Because there would be no room for the Sword of the Magistrate. 3 p. 24

## The Table.

- 4 Because though a carnal man cannot put off the old man, yet it is not his nature to commit this sin at this time and in this manner, ibid.
5. A wicked man can do more good, &c. Because a godly regenerate man may avoid more sin than he doth, p. 25
- The ground farther proved by particulars.*
- 1 Part. The will hath dominion over all the outward acts of the members, p. 26
- 2 Part. Every man hath natural affection in him by which he may do more than he doth, and shun more evil than he doth, p. 27
- 3 God hath given to every man natural counsel, and natural Reason and Prudence, p. 30
- 4 That is first in order which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual, and if a man stick there, he sticks as a will-not, p. 31

### *The second Ground.*

- 2 Ground Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent, p. 34
- Five demonstrations to prove it.*

- 1 Demon. Every wicked man doth imagine more cannots than there be, p. 35
- 2 He makes every little difficulty a cannot, when as nothing but an impossibility is a cannot. p. 36
- 3 A slothfull man turns his very abilities into cannots p. 37
- 4 He doth voluntarily nail himself unto cannots p. 38
- 5 He putteth forth by halves that power which he hath, p. 39
- Conclusi. There is more in a wicked man than by reason of sluggishness he putteth forth, p. 40

### *Six Arguments to prove this.*

- 1 Arg. It is a sign it is in him, p. 40
- 1 Because when God doth convert a sinner, He doth not put in new powers and faculties into the soul, ib.
- 2 Because he can shew as great power otherwise, p. 41
- 3 Because he can shew it too when he list. p. 42
- 4 Because the rod is able to whip it out of him, p. 43
- 5 Because he can do an hundred times more when he is pleased, p. 44
- 6 Because he will shew it in Hell, viz. That it was in him to do more than he did, p. 49
- 3 Ground A wicked man will not set himself to use all the means that

# The Table.

that he may,	p. 52	
A wicked man may use the means that God appointed	Demon.	
as means,	p. 52	
Because 'tis the very nature of means to come between	1: Argu.	
ones can, and his cannot,	ibid.	
Because God doth not exhort men like a company of	2	
stocks and stones, but as men that are edifiable by his		
words.	p. 53	
Because Gods anger is very reasonable.	p. 54	3
Because Gods offer of his Kingdom to the wicked is		4
serious,	p. 55	
Because Gods reproofs are very equal,	p. 56	5
His condemnation must be wilfull, that will not use all the	Conclusi.	
means,	p. 57	

## *Proved by three Arguments.*

God will not help that man by a miracle to go, that hath	1. Arg.	
legs to go, and will not	ibid.	
God will not bate a farthing of the price he sets thee at	2	
	p. 56	
God will never be brought out of his walk to shew thee	3	
any mercy, or give thee any grace	p. 60	
Gods Kingdom cannot be attained without a diligent use	Conclusi.	
of the means	p. 63	

## *Reasons of it.*

Because Heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten	1. Reaf.	
without means	ibid.	
God hath annexed it to the means	ibid.	2
Every soul must give an account before God how he hath	3	
used the means	ibid.	
God will not set up another door into heaven for any man	4	
in the world	ibid.	

## *Farther proofs and encouragements to use the means.*

Some of the means that God hath appointed, you may do	1	
them without labour	p. 64	
Some of the means that God hath appointed are easier	2	
than them	ibid.	
Some of the means are easier yet	ibid.	
Some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them than	3	
to use them	p. 65	
Some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are	4	
but hard, they are not impossible for you to use	p. 65	5
	ob-	

# The Table.

## Objections.

**Object. 1.** The first Objection's drawn from the Scriptures which say they cannot,

**Ans.** The Scripture speaks of five cannots, 1. Of a natural cannot, 2. Of a deliberate cannot, 3. Of a judicial cannot, 4. Of a compounded cannot, 5. Of a humbling cannot.

**2 Object.** Thou wouldst (as thou pretendst) but thou canst not.

**Ans.** Perhaps its the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart, 1. May be its a copulative will, Repentance and some lust, godliness and some lust. 3. May be thou hast a would ng will, this is no will but onely a velleity, 4. May be thou hast a general Metaphysical will, but to come to particulars, there thou wilt not. 5. Thou hast no true will, because if thou didst will, thou couldst. p. 71

**3 Object.** Thou desirest to do it, but art not able.

**Ans.** Who can tell best what is in thee, God or thine own heart. But the reason of this mistake is, 1. Thou hast purative or thinking desires, thou think'st thou desirest, 2. Thou hast ignorant desires, 3. Thou hast wandering desires, and therefore thou art mistaken, p. 77

**4 Object.** Thou reidvest, and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not perform them.

**Ans.** These purposes thou speakest of are only willing for the future, 1. Because its only to shuffle off the willing for the present, 2. This will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods, 2. It is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou wiltst upon.

First, thou supposeth thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter, 2. Thou supposeth thou shalt be fitter hereafter, 3. Thy will for hereafter is no will but a mockery.

**5 Object.** Thou labourest to serve God and to be saved.

**Ans.** Is this labour for Grace and Heaven, when thou labourest so idly? wherefore thy impenitency is wilful, thy damnation's wilful, and thy ruine wilful. p. 81

Hence also it followes, 1. That your destruction is from self, 2. Your destruction is just, 3. Your destruction is inexcusable, 4. Your destruction is unavoydable, 5. Your destruction is pitiless, 6. Your destruction is grievous, p. 81

## Application.

**Use 1.** Of Thou canst never be humble unless thou believe this truth. Instruct- a man is never humbled as long as he excuses himself on. Now p. 84

# The Table

First, thou excusest thy self for all transgressions, besides original,	ibid.	1 Excuse:
Now thou excusest thy self from original sin too; Lord I would be without sin, but I cannot.	p. 85	2
Nay thou excusest thy self for every sin: thou takest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities,		3
Nay thou commendest thy self more than God,	p. 87	4
Nay thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will: thou art so proud that thou conceivest thou hast that already,	p. 88	5
Nay thou layst all the blame upon God.	p. 89	6
First, because you cast the blame upon nature, Irs my nature, and I cannot,	ibid.	1 Demon.
Secondly, thou dost cast the blame upon temptations, Irs my hard hap to fall upon temptations,	p. 90	2
Thirdly, thou layest the blame upon the Times, the Times are very bad,	p. 91	3
Fourthly, thou layest the blame upon this commandment: If it were any Commandement but this, I would do it,	ibid.	4
Fifthly, thou layest the blame upon ill fortune, and bad luck,	p. 92	5
Nay sixthly, thou findest fault with all Gods proceedings,	p. 94	6
This discovers the deceitfulness of thy heart	p. 95 Use 2.	
First, thou wouldst very fain, if God would enable thee: but thy heart does but ly unto God.	ibid.	
Secondly, hereby thou dodgest with God, and temptest the Lord,	p. 96	
Thirdly, hereby thou shufflest off the word, when thou hast heard it,	ibid.	
This point calls for great humiliation; for	Use 3,	
1 Here lies especially the pride of the heart, not in mens cannots, but their will nots,	ibid.	
2 Here lies especially the hardning of the heart,	p. 98	
3 Here lies especially the stubborness of the heart,	ibid.	
4 Here lies the greatest despising of the Commandements of God.	p. 99	
To quicken the thankfulness of the godly,	ibid.	Use 4:
A seasonable Item to all Rebellious spirits,	p. 100	
1 Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in Adam, but thou must willingly stand out again?	p. 101	
2 Consider the very Saints of God that have not half		

## The Table.

half so many will-nots as you, that stick more truly at cannot.

3 Consider the more shamefull ones sin is, the more reason to be humbled,

Nay fourthly, consider there's no greater shame than to make away ones self,

5 Consider, if you would but vex your own soul with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot.

*The danger of bays pleae and pretences.*

1. This same pleading is the cause why you are lazie and idle in the use of the means, viz. because you suffer your hearts to plead, oh we cannot do it

2. This same pleading brings up an evill report upon piety and godliness

3. This same pleading is a murmuring against God, q. d. why does God g ve me such commandements that I cannot observe?

4. This is the sawciest excuse of all excuses

5. Nay here lies the reason why Divines say, that the conversion of a sinner is an harder work than the creation of heaven and earth, first because

Here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a convert of nothing

2. As there was nothing præexistent in the creation to help, so there was nothing to resist; but here is something to resist, the will it resisteth

*The danger of sticking at a will not is farther cleared.*

1. If you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own heads,

2. If you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition

Nay thirdly, if you will not, the blood of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for

4. If you will not, you murder your own souls

A seasonable *Item* to the redeemed of the Lord, that they take heed of wil-nots; for

1. We never sin against Gospel, nor despise God but only upon wil-nots.

2. Conscience can never condemn us, nor God can never be angry with us, but only upon wil-nots

*The end of the Table.*

WILFULL  
IMPENITENCY  
THE GROSSEST  
SELF-MURDER.

Ezek. 18. 31, 32.

*For why will ye die, O ye house of Israel?*

**T**He wicked in this Chapter dispute against God; *the Father hath eaten sour Grapes, and the Childrens teeth are set on edge.* Our Fathers have sinned, and we are punished; a common cavil in every natural mans heart, when its urged: *Adam fell, and his poor posterity smart for it, if God will needs damn us he may, we have no power for to help it; for who hath resisted his will?* this is mans Syllogism. God who might send man to hell for answer, answers calmly. The division of the Text

1. By adjuration, as *I live*, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion to use this proverb any more as *Israel*: v. 3. Gods calm answer to their forward cavils in particulars,

2. By an assertion, the *soul that sinneth, it shall dye*, v. 4. no soul shall dye but only the same that doth sin.

3. By explication of himself; if a man do that which is right he shall live, verse 5, 6. if he have been never so wicked, yet if he returned he shall not dye, v. 21.

4. By

## The Table.

half so many will-nots as you, that stick more truly at cannot.

3 Consider the more shamefull ones sin is, the more ready to be humbled, p. 10

Nay fourthly, consider there's no greater shame than to make away ones self, ibid

5 Consider, if you would but vex your own soul with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot. p. 10

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4. By

4. By appealing to their consciences; have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye, saith the Lord? and not that he should return and live? verse 23. have I any pleasure? I appeal to all your consciences, have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye?

5. By retorting; hear now O house of Israel, is not my way equal? or are not your wayes rather unequal? v. 25.

6. By a conclusion; therefore I will judge you O house of Israel, every one according to his waies, vers. 30.

7. By a final decision of the whole controversie; repent and turn your selves, &c. so iniquitie shall not be your ruine? cast away from you all, &c. for why will ye die, &c?

Where we have these four things.

Four  
things ve-  
ry obser-  
vable.

1. God disclaims all cause of their damnation from his secret will. I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.

2. He removes all cause of the destruction from his revealed will; repent and turn your selves, &c. so iniquity shall not be your ruin; cast away &c.

3. He disavowes all cause of their destruction from his permissive will, as though that were guilty, or accessary to it; they can have no colour why they are not wrought upon; make you new heart, and a new spirit: Make not the fault at his dore, no it lies at your dore, make you new heart.

4. He casts all cause of their destruction upon their own rebellious wills. Why will ye dye O house of Israel?

— 1 What

1. What is the cause ye live in your sins, and die and perish in your sins? is it because I am *not merciful*? you know I am gracious, and full of mercy, and *ready to forgive*; why then, *why will ye die O house of Israel*?

2. Is it because I am swift to *revenge*? you <sup>Israel's</sup> know I am *slow to anger*, and give you a *warning* <sup>perdition</sup> before I *consume* you; *why then will ye die O house* <sup>not from</sup> *of Israel* <sup>God.</sup>?

3. Is it because I will destroy you for *Ahaz*, or *Manasses*, or *Zedekiahs*, or *Adams* sin? you know, that if the Son walk not in the Fa- <sup>Quasi canis</sup> <sup>peccatum</sup> <sup>suus depen-</sup> *thers* sin, I use to receive him, you can bear me *witness*. I call you to a *new Covenant*, *why then deret*. *Will ye die O house of Israel*?

4. Is it because ye have no *Saviour*? you know <sup>Rev. 13. 8:</sup> that the *Lamb of God*, *Christ Jesus*, was slain for <sup>John 3. 16</sup> *you from the beginning of the World*, that you may be *saved upon faith*.

5. Is it because you have *no power*? ye know I offer you *grace and power*, and ye will not have it; *why then will ye die*? &c.

6. Some Authors allege *five why's* more, why will ye, &c. Is it for this cause, or that cause, or that? or what cause is it? no cause on *Gods* side, no, ye may *thank your own wills* if you *perish*; this, this onely *accuseth* you, you will *not* <sup>Id unam</sup> be *ruled*: you are *carelesse* of *God*, *Christ*, *grace*, <sup>vos accusat</sup> and you will be *so*; ye are *vain and carnal*, and <sup>respicere</sup> *obstinate*, and ye will be *so*; woe unto thee *O* <sup>non vultis</sup> *Jerusalem*, wilt thou not be *made clean*? when shall it *once be*? Jer. 13. 13. 27. he does not say woe unto thee *Jerusalem*, *canst* thou not be *made clean*?  
but

# *Wilfull Impenitency.*

but wilt thou not be made clean?

*Presuppositions not to be mistaken.*

**I Presupposition not to be mistaken.** I. Its true that a wicked man cannot repent nor be converted of himself; but this cannot only do's not hinder him; if a wicked mans cannot only did hinder him, he might excuse himself before the tribunal of Christ; Lord, thou knowest I did my best, I would have been ruled by thy word, but I could not: I would have been humbled and reformed better than I was, but I could not. If a wicked mans cannot did hinder him, he might excuse himself thus. But alas, he is not able to say thus without peremptory lying. Lord, I could not chuse but do wickedly; I acted most wretchedly, but I could not otherwise chuse: though it was not in thy power not to be born in original sin; yet who necessitated thee to commit such gross actual sins? in Prov. 1. 29. *they hated knowledge, they did not chuse the way of the Lord.* They did not use any liberty of will to chuse that which was good: What? was it because they could not? no; for albeit they could not, yet that was not the cause. No, they would none of my counsels, they despised all my reproof, v. 30. Mark, the reason why they did not chuse, was not because they could not choose, but because they would not.

*Licet aliquis non possit gratiam adipisci qui reprobatu deo, tamen quod in hoc vel illud peccatum labatur ex eius libero arbitrio contingit, unde de merito sibi in culpam imputatur.*  
*Aq. par. 1. qu. 23.*  
*Art. 3. resp. ad Arg. tertium.*

**a Presup.** Its true God doth not give them power to believe, and to be renewed; but can they say, though I would seriously, God would not? were they able to say thus, though I desired it heartily, God would not give me grace, then they had some colour

colour to cast it upon God, I would, but God would not. But they cannot cast it upon him. How often would I have gathered thee together, Mat 23: even as a Hen gathereth her chickens, but thou 37. wouldest not? I would, said God, but you would not; nay, how often would I, but you would not? Mat. 23. 37. Though God be not so willing as to give them all power to believe, and be saved, yet he is *aforehand* with them.

'Tis true, if the wicked should will as far as 3. *Presup:* they are able to will; yet their will were not able full out; but this doth not excuse them; because God alwayes resolved to be *aforehand* with them. Indeed as in *Matt. 25. 29.* God gives his servants this rule by which he ever goes towards them, *unto every one that hath shall be* Mat. 25: *given, and he shall have abundance;* speaking 29. of things in *eodem genere*. But to apply it to a man in the state of nature, is to say grace is given according to works, which is the very dreggs of *Pelagianism*. Yet however, all this is a most encouraging intimation. Let Facienti any man use the power that God gives him, and quod in se he shall have more. As he that takes pains est, deus for learning; As he that useth means to in- faciet quod crease his estate; may find in ordinary provi- in se. Pela- dence, *the hand of the diligent makes rich.* He that gia. es. useth a penny well, makes it two pence; he Pro. 10. 4: that useth two pennies very well, makes it a & 10. 22. groat.

So that though there be not such an *Infal-*  
*libilis nexus*, that God hath bound himself in  
the use of our natural abilities to add supernatural  
graces, yet undoubtedly he will never be want-

ing to promote any good work, till men neglect or contemn. And this leaves men wholly without excuse, and shews it is not their cannot, but their will not, which betrays them to their spiritual losses; namely their wilful rejecting of Gods gracious offers.

4. *Presup.* It's true, God gives the wicked but one Talent, when he giveth his children four, two at the least; but they cannot say he is austere, reaping where he sowed not, gathering where he strowed not. No, There's the same proportion between one Talent, and gathering one more, as there is between two, and the gathering of two others, &c.

You know that they are ready to complain, as Christ shews it in the Parable, Lord, I know that thou wast a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strowed: But ye remember also the Lords answer: Thou wicked and sloathful servant, &c. Mat. 25. 26. Mark, he casts the blame upon his wilfulness, that he would not take pains for to trade. So the wicked complain, alas God hath not sown any power of conversion in my heart, and will he look for to reap it? This is austere nesse and hardnesse of dealing. Oh thou wicked and sloathful servant, &c. Why didst thou not trade with the Talent that I gave thee? One Talent should beget one, as well as two beget two, &c. But I gave thee wit, and thou buriedst it in the earth, and hast been earthly with it; I gave thee knowledge, and thou hast hid it in the earth, and not traded for reformation according to it, &c.

Alas

Alas thou canst not plead a cannot, but only a will not.

Its true, that if one wicked man *will be more* <sup>Presup.</sup> *willing than another*, it is not from *himself*; 1 Cor. 5. 7 but from God: For *what* hast thou that thou hast not received? 1 Cor. 4. 7. Its God that maketh one wicked man to differ from another in goodness, and to be better than another. One wicked man is a drunkard, another is better, &c. One wicked man is more wilfull, another is less. Its God that makes this difference; yet notwithstanding its his own fault, that he is not so good as his neighbour, especially when he sits under better helps than his neighbour. The men of Nineveh shall rise up against this generation <sup>Mat. 14</sup> <sup>41.</sup> and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Ionah, and behold a greater than Ionah is here. See, this generation was worse than Nineveh. Nineveh repented a great way, even in sackcloth & ashes, but this generation doth not. I grant it was God that did make them do more than this generation doth do. For all would be alike wilfull if it were not for him. But yet this generation cannot plead in judgement, Lord, thou wast not so gracious unto us as to Nineveh: No, Jesus Christ expressly telleth them, Nineveh shall rise up in judgement against them, q. d. Nineveh was not so wilful as you, Nineveh would, but you would not. Our Saviour Christ ascribes it to their wilfulness, that they were not so willing as Nineveh; Nineveh would, but you would not. Thus you see, the suppositions, which I beseech you remember as we go, lest perhaps you mistake us.

Doct.

The reason why the wicked do not repent nor come out of their sins, is not because they cannot, (though they cannot) but because they will not.

A&amp;S, 31.

Peter saith to Ananias, Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the holy Ghost, to keep back part of the price of the Land? was it not once in thy power? Before thou didst promise 'twas in thy power whether thou wouldst promise or no, did any force thee to promise? and when thou hadst promised, did any squeeze the ly out of thy tongue that thou shouldest tell a lie to the Holy Ghost? did any drag thy finger to the mony and force thee to handle it? no, thou wouldst lie, and thou wouldst finger it.

7 Demonstrations to prove this.

I Demon.

1 The wicked think they have power to repent.

Prov. 6. 10

All the freewill-mongers reason why they do not repent, is because they will not; out of their own mouth will God condemn them.

1. The wicked think they have power, and yet they will not do according to their thoughts. What's the reason they presume to repent another time, but because they think they have power? what's the reason they hope to repent on their death beds, but because they think they have power? or at least that they are able to beg power of Christ Iesus. Now by their own thoughts God will convince them, that they do not give over their sins because they will not; like the sluggard, yet a little more sleep, yet a little more slumber, yet a little more folding of the hands to sleep; the sluggard, he thinks he can rise time enough, and do all his business ere the night, though he lie a little longer; and therefore does he presume to lie a while longer; So thou art loth to come out of thy sins yet, time enough yet thinkest thou, thou hast secret thoughts thou art

## The grossest Self-murder.

9

art able to shift for Heaven afterwards; tush, an  
 unhappy youth may make a good old man, and  
 a young Saint an old Devil. Hence it is that  
 the Whoremaster he can plead, did not David  
 commit adultery too? as though he could get  
 up again as well as he; the drunkard, was not  
 Noah drunk? as though he were able to re-  
 pent as well as he. *The Thief on the Cross*, did Luk. 25.  
 not he repent at last gaspe? as though he could 40.  
 shift as well at last; so they think they can  
 leave off their sins for a need; and therefore  
 the reason why they do not, is only because  
 they will not. He that thinks he hath a hundred  
 Pound of his own in his purse, and yet will not  
 give a poor body a half-penny, what's the  
 reason he will not open his purse to give?  
 because he cannot? No, he thinks he hath it  
 and can; but he will not; so the reason  
 why thou art not reformed, is, thou wilt  
 not.

2. Demonstration. Because thou dost not so 2 Demon.  
 much as try whether thou canst or no. There- 2 They  
 fore thou dost not stick at a cannot, but a will-not. will not  
 When a Master bids his servant carry a sack of try.  
 Corn to the Mill; I cannot sayes he; but can-  
 not you try, sayes his Master, cannot you go  
 about it? no, he will not try; why then he is  
 wilfull; if his Master should see him sweating  
 and striving to carry it, it were something, then  
 he would say he stuck at a cannot; but when  
 he will not be at the pains to try, he sticks at  
 a will-not. So thou stickst at a will not, thou  
 dost not every day in *arenam descendere*, sweat  
 at good duties, thou dost not study and labour

*Tentantes  
ad Trojam  
pervenere  
Graci.  
Theo.*

every day to *shun all temptations*, and prevent *all thy sins*, thou dost not go about the cleansing of thy Family, the purging of thy House, thou *wilt not* go about it, and therefore the reason is, because that thou *wilt not*. Nay its all one whether thou hast power yea or no. To what end should God give thee power? for thou *wilt not* use it. Nay, how dost thou *know* but when thou goest about it, thou mayest meet with some power? but thou *wilt not try*, cut down thy drunken signe, and *try*; never let drinking and swilling be in thy house, and *try*, set up constant holy conferences, and *try*, frequent Prayer in thy Closet, and *try*; &c. But I have tryed again and again, and yet it will not do, every day try though, *si crebro jacias aleas, alind jeceris*, though thou hast thrown the Dye a hundred times, yet next time may be thou shalt throw a good cast; But thou *wilt not try*. I would have *healed Babel*, but *she would not be healed*. The field of the *slothfull* was all grown over with Thorns, and Nettles had covered all the face thereof, and the *stone wall* thereof was broken down, *Prov. 24.31*. what's the reason he hath not a good crop? because the ground would not bear it? no, how does he know? he *will not try*, he will not plow it and *harrow* it, and *weed* it and *manure* it, and *sow* it, he *will not try*, therefore tis because he *will not*.

3 Demon. They refuse the help which God offers

3. Demonstration. God offers thee many good motions of power: I will help thee, and I will inable thee, and thou *wilt not be helped*; God casts

• *The grossest Self murder:*

II

casts in these good motions, and thou casts them out. Stand ye in the wayes, and so, ask for the Jer. 6. 16. old paths, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls; but they said, we will not walk therein. O do but ask for the good way, and labour to walk in it, I'll help you, and assist you; but we will not, say they. I set watchmen over you, saying, *Hearken to the sound of the Trumpet*, but they said, *We will not hearken*, vers. 17. This is plain English, as we say, *you will not*; ye have preaching every Sabbath, and every week, but ye will not; God sends you good motions every day and hour, but ye will not; when a beggar will not be helpt, why does he starve? what because he *cannot chosse*? no, he starves because he *will starve*. O saiest thou, I do hear the word, and I cannot hear it better. I do pray daily, and I cannot pray better, &c. Thus thou retortest upon God, as the *unprofitable servant*, Lo, *there thou* Mat. 25. *hast that is thine*: Loe, here's the best faith thy Spirit helps me to, here's the best obedience that thy power enabled me to, &c. Lo, there thou hast that is thine, thou helpest me with no more. I was not able to do better. *Quo ore potest hoc dicere?* says, *Gualter*, with what face canst thou say thus? is this all that God hath offered to enable thee? ah thou wilful creature! The Lord hath offered to help thee to a thousand times more, but thou wouldst *not be* 4. *Demon* *helped*. And will

4. Demonstration. God hath not only offered thee power to do more, and thou wilt not take power which he it, but also given thee more power, and thou wilt hath gi not ven.

Prov. 17.  
16.

*not use it*, and therefore the reason why thou dost not, is because thou wilt not; God hath given thee one *talent of power* at the least; why dost thou not put it out to the *merchandizers* and occupy with it? ταλατορ ἐκείνου δυνάμις, says *Chrys.* The power that God hath vouchsafed thee is thy *talent*. Why didst not thou imploy it to the utmost? every Sermon gives thee a new power, a new price, so every good counsel gives thee a new power; what art thou better? every blessing thou hast had, gives thee a new power, wherein art thou *prurer*? does God give thee but eyes? thou hast more power to glorifie him than he that hath none, &c. Every *mercy* helps thee with new power; but wherein dost thou use it? God hath given thee good memory, how hast thou stufed it? means and maintenance, how hast thou honoured God? why, &c. thine own conscience accuseth thee, thou hast wasted his goods, wasted them upon belly and back, which have devoured more thoughts than ever his worship could have; thou hast wasted them upon thy credit in the World, and thy pleasure, and thy lusts, and thy fleshly desires. How is it that I hear this of thee? Thou shalt hear one day of this dismal watchword, *give account of thy Stewardship, for thou may'st be no longer Steward.* What dost thou talking of thy want of power? I could not do this, and I could not do that; where are my goods that I lent thee? give account for thy memory. Lord, I remember this and that Tale, this and that bawble; thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, and why couldst thou

thou not remember my Commandements as well? give account for thy wit. Lord, I have contrived businesses, bargains with it, I have jested, quipped, been merry with it; thou evill and unprofitable servant thou, why couldst thou not be witty for God, and for the good of thy soul? &c. God hath given a great deal of more power than ever thou bringest to act, and therefore thou art wilful.

5. Demonstration. The more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. The more means that God doth vouchsafe, the more Preaching, the more knowledge, the more reproofs, the more inlightnings, the more power thou hast to repent, the more thy will is against it. Bernard sayes, such a one is a per-

verse man that God is fain to say to, *quid faciam tibi?* what shall I do unto thee? O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? for thy righteousness goes away like the dew. *Hof. 6.*

4. The more means thou enjoyest, the more thy righteousness goes away; one would think the more the Sun-shine of the Gospel ariseth, the more your righteousness should encrease; it goes the more away, like the dew, the more the Sun riseth, the more it vanisheth away; like many of you, the more Preaching you have, the farther ye are off; a man might be acquainted with you heretofore, but now that you have been soundly rebuked for your sins, the further you flye off; nay, some of you that were somewhat forward heretofore, are mockers now; some of you that were somewhat towardsly heretofore, are more covetous and

and *waspish*, and *Passionate*, and *Worldly* : like the weeds, the more they are pluckt up the more they do grow ; or like the earth, the more it is washed, the dirtier it proves : so the more means ye have to be enabled to good, the *wilfuller* ye are.

6 Demon.  
Their  
cannot is  
voluntary  
A Moral  
impoten-  
cy.

6. Demonstration. Because *thy cannot is a voluntary cannot* ; thou hast wilfully brought the most part of thy cannot upon thee. I cannot give to the poor sayest thou ; yea, but thou hadst it once, and thou hast wilfully spent it ; thou hadst Lands and Means, and comings in, but thou hast spent it at the Alehouse ; thou hast consumed it on the gamehouse. Thus thy *cannot*, is a voluntary cannot ; *Causa causa est causa causati* : thy *will* was the cause of thy *cannot*, and therefore thy *will* is the cause of thy not giving to the poor. I cannot read, sayes one, and no marvel if I be ignorant : but thy Parents would have set thee to School, and thou wouldst be a trewant, therefore thou art willingly ignorant. I cannot remember a Sermon sayes another, no wonder though I repeat it not in my Family, but forget it as I do : but thou hast willingly ram'd it with matters of the World, or hast weakned it with drinking, and therefore thou art wilfully forgetful, &c. The unprofitable servant was curst that had laid up his pound safe in a Napkin : hee did not lessen it, nor imbezel it, but only laid it up, and yet he was curst because he did not *διπλῶν προσενεγκῶν*, sayes Chrysost. he was curst, because he did not double his pound,

Luke 19.  
20.  
Chrysost.

pound; ah the wofull estate that thou art in! if he were accursed that did lay up his pound, what shall become of thee that dost lessen it? he did not double his abilities, and therefore he was accursed; thou dost not only *not double* thy abilities, but thou *dost lessen* them. God hath inabled thee to do many a thing, and now thou art not able, thou hast *willingly* lessened thine *abilitie*; now then thou canst not excuse thy self that thou *canst not*, because thou hast brought this *cannot on thy self*: Thou canst not weep at a Sermon, but thou couldst once; thou canst not resist such a lust, but thou couldst once, and thou hast *willingly brought this cannot on thy soul*, and therefore this is all the cause because *that thou wilt not*.

7. Demonstration. May be thou canst not, *7 Demon.* yea, but thou art *contented with thy cannot*; They are thou canst not be holy, and thou art *contented* not to be; thou canst not crucifie thy *ed with* lust, and thou art *contented with this cannot*, nay thou *wouldst not be able*. Sir, I tell you how you may put up this injury if you will; but Sir you shall not make me put it up, *I will not be directed by you*; as it was with desperate *Iudah*, My people love to have it so. Thou art carnal, and thou lovest to be *Jer. 5.31*, so; were a man in the stocks, and not able to get out, yet if he be *contented* to be there, though he cannot get out, that is not the reason of his staying, but *he will not*; thou canst not walk humbly and holily, *and thou lovest to have it so*; what would you have me so

so pure forsooth? So then the reason is because that thou wilt not; if thy will were not it, thou wouldst never be content with thy *cannot*; the Congregation is bad, and thou lovest to have it so, the more custome thou shalt have for thy Ale-house; like a bad *Clerk of the Assizes*, I heard one speak it my self, he was glad there was so many *Rogues*, he had the more money; so some of you are glad there be so many *frequenters* of the *Ale-bench*, ye have the more *custom*, ye love to have it so; ye cannot reform the sins of one another, and yet love to have it so.

The Presuppositions premised, and the Demonstrations prefixed, it follows now that I lay down the ground of this necessary truth. (*Scil.*)

*The reason why a wicked man doth not turn unto God, is not because he cannot (though he cannot) but because he will not.*

He cannot say this at the day of *Iudgement*, Lord, *thou knowest* I left every sin that I could, and I took all the best courses that I could to become a new creature, but I could not. A wicked man shall not be able to say thus without lying. The man in the *Gospel* that had not on the *wedding garment*, could he say, Lord I was not able to go to the *shop of the Gospel* to seek one? No, he was *speechless*, *Matth. 22. 12.* God finds out the hypocrite, though but one, and when once discovered, he is confounded and silenced with the guilt of his own wilfulness.

## The first Ground.

**T**He first Ground is this, which is observed by our learned *Divines* at the *Synod at Dort*, namely,

*Every man can do more good than he does*, Art 3. & *and shun more evil than he does*, though I confesse not in a gracious manner. If I can prove this to be true, it will necessarily follow that the reason why a wicked man does not return, is not because he cannot, but onely because he wil not. 4. in refut. 3. 4. error: posit.

### *Arguments to prove it.*

I. Consider, if a man can do more than he doth, nothing can hinder him from doing more than he does but *his will*; when the fire can burn more, it doth burn more, because it hath no will to come between the power of burning and the act of burning to suspend it. I Confid. Every The fire is a natural agent, and therefore burns as much as it can: but a man is a voluntary agent, and therefore when he can do a thing and does not, 'tis because his will comes between to suspend it: So that the reason is this, he will not. Pilate, he had power to crucifie Christ, and power not to do it, *Iohn 19. 10.* he had power not to do it; why then does he crucifie him? not because he had no power to do otherwise; he confesses himself he had power to do otherwise; but he crucified Christ because he would do so. When a man hath power to do a thing, or not to do a thing, Its

Its the will that either suspends or determines.

2 *Consid.* 2. Consideration, that if a man can do more than he does, and yet will not, he must *needs voluntarily hinder himself* from doing that which he *cannot*; the reason is, because a man must first do that which *he can*, before he can come to that part which he *cannot*. Suppose a lame man were to go to *London* from hence, and not able to go one mile of the journey, but there stands one at the *Church-stile*, that offers if he will but crawl thither, to carry him; he is able to crawl so far as the *Church-stile*, but he will not; does not he voluntarily hinder himself from going to *London*? *that which he can do, must be done first, before that which he cannot.* So ye that live in your sins, you must first do that which you can, before you *can look* that God should help you to do that which you *cannot*; if thou dost all that thou canst, for ought that thou knowest, *Christ*, though he have not absolutely engaged himself, stands at the *Church-stile*, there ready to help thee. *There be men in the world whom he is resolved to help; thou dost not know but thou art the man.* *Christ* hath not told thee any thing to the contrary, but only he bids thee do what thou canst; canst not thou cut off thy long hair? are no Sizzers able to cut it? have not you a Tongue in your heads, ye that keep disorders in your Ale-houses? cannot you say get you hence ye drunken companions, here's no entertainment for you? you must do that which you can, before you can expect *Christs* help

help to do that which you cannot ; and if you will not do that which you can , you do voluntarily hinder your own selves from doing that which you cannot ; *Ioshua* could not stand before *Ai*, nor hinder a close *Achan* from taking the golden wedge ; but when it was taken and known, he was able to make him an example. *Ioshuah* he fasted and cryed unto God all day untill night, that the Lord would mercifully save him and all *Israel* ; Now hear that answer the Lord gives him, Get thee up saith he, why lyeest thou here ? *Iosh. 7. 10. Israel hath sinned, go and execute Justice, go, and do that first, and then I will answer thee about Ai* ; for if *Ioshuah* would not have done what he could, the Lord would never have helpt him to do that which he could not. So thou prayest for mercy and grace, oh that God would convert thee and pardon thee ; Get thee up sayes God, dost thou stand praying for mercy, as long as such things and such things are not reformed ? thou hast drunkenness in thy house , go and reform that ; thou art in league with a sort of base lusts, go and reform them ; if thou wilt not do that which thou canst, how canst thou be sure God will help thee to do that which thou canst not ? no thou stick'st at a will not, as long as thou refusest to do that.

3. Consider, if a man will not do that which he can, neither will he do that which he cannot if he could ; the servant that will not go five or six miles in a day which he can for his Master, neither would he go a hundred miles for his Master if he could ; you that can reform outwardly

wardly, at least if you would, and yet will not; neither would you reform *more if you could*; ye have mony in your purses, cannot you spend it better than upon swilling and drinking, and gaming? *ye can well enough*, but *ye will not*. So you would do, had you that true riches, *Luke 16. 11*. Ye have *natural abilities*, if ye will not be faithful in them, so it would be if so be ye had better; ye that have *moral and civil endowments*, if ye will not be faithful in them, neither would you if God should lend you more, &c. ye are able to avoid swearing and lying, but ye will not, neither would ye avoyd all other sins if ye could; if a man will not do *that which he can*, neither will he do *that which he cannot if he could*.

4. Confid. 4. Consider, *If a man will not do that which he can, can or cannot all's one to him*, all sticks at his will. I cannot repent, and I cannot give over my sins, sayest thou; and I pray thee who told thee that thou canst not? I am naked *sayes Adam*, and who told thee that thou wert naked? *sayes God, Gen. 3. 11*. So may I say, who told thee thou canst not? does not thy own conscience tell thee 'tis because thou wilt not? I cannot digg *sayes the lazy Steward*, and to begg I am ashamed, *Luke 16. 3*. I cannot digg; had he had a cudgel about his back, it would make him to digg; to begg I am ashamed, *sayes he* he was not ashamed to cozen his Master of his goods, but he was ashamed to begg. I have married a Wife, and I cannot come, *Luke 14. 20*. No, what did his Wife tye his leggs? there

is a Lyon in the way, I cannot go out saies the fluggard: alas thy own fluggish wilfull wills are this <sup>Prov. 22: 13.</sup> cannot. Can or cannot alls one to them, they never come to try whether they can, yea or no: the fluggard never lookt out to see the Lyon in the way, but he dreamt there was one there, and he was willing to believe it, he would not go out to see: the idle steward did not try whether he could digg, yea or no; if he had taken the Spade in his hand, and gone about the work, twere another matter; but I cannot dig, saies he, he never would put it to tryal, but takes another course without trying of that; so that alls one can, or cannot, if a man will not do that which he can, can or cannot all one to him.

5. Consider, If a man will not do that which he can, this will make a mans conscience when it comes to speak in sober sadnes, thank him-  
self for his perishing; mens consciences doe but jest with them now, while they can say, tush, tis because I cannot believe, and because I cannot repent; but at the hower of conviction, or the day of Iudgement at farthest, then conscience will speak in sober sadnes; when I was hungry, ye gave me no meat, saies, Christ, when I was a begger ye gave me no drink, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, sick and in prison and ye visited me not, Matth. 25. 43. Mark, Christ puts no cannots on their consciences at the day of judgement; could they say, alas, we had never a bit of bread for to do it, never a drop of drink for to do it? no, you shall see how their consciences were mute; they could not say that they  
D could

could not; could not ye comfort *Christs* dear members as well as *mock them*? couldst thou not take them into thine house as well as *carnal acquaintance*? its worthy observation to consider, that generally *Gods threatnings* do not run against *Cannots*, nor his *judgements* against *Cannots*, but against mens particular sins, that they *might have avoided*; for though mens sinfull consciences *do necessarily incline men to sin*, yet not *unto this sin*, nor *that sin*; *non determinat necessario ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & nunc*, say our *Britan Divines* at the *Synod*. Sinfull concupiscence does not necessarily determine men upon these and these sins, with the particular circumstances which they live in, as this rapine, this lye, &c. thus ye see this will make a sure ground of our Doctrine, if so be we can prove it.

*Every man can do more good than he does, and avoid more evil than he does.*

This is a most certain and infallible truth, and needs no confirmation, but I will prove it notwithstanding.

- 1 *Argu.* First because God doth complain against the wicked for the voluntary doing no more good than they do; what so much preaching and no more good? so many means and no more fruit, &c? so God complains against Israel, nevertheless they departed not from the sins of Ieroboam, &c. and there remained the groves also in Samaria, 2 Kings 13. 6. the grove also; what not so much as the grove cut down? and ye must have the sins of Ieroboam; that were enough stubbornness

nesse one would think; but must yet suffer the grove also? reform nothing, no, not the grove under your face? see how God girdeth their wilfull security that they would do no more good than they did; nor so much as cut down that grove; so many warnings and threatenings, &c. and yet the grove also? yet thy filthy Tongue, thy covetousnesse also, &c. not only keep thy other lusts, but thy prophanes also?

Secondly, because otherwise there were *no 2. Argu.*  
 room for praise nor dispraise, if a man could do *Tametsi*  
 no more good than he does, nor shun no more *impossibile*  
 evill than he does, then no man could be *erat Iudeis*  
 praised nor dispraised; you know that wicked *converiti*  
 men and women may do many commendable *per exter-*  
 things, at least more commendable ones than *nam pradi-*  
 others; does not our Saviour discommend Beth- *cationem*  
 saida and Corazin in comparison of Tyre and *Evangeliu*  
 Sidon? wouunto thee Corazin, wo unto thee *absq; pra-*  
 Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which *determi-*  
 have been done in thee, had been done in *nante gra.*  
 Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in *tia: quia ta-*  
 sackcloth and ashes, *Matth. 11. 21.* might *men obdu-*  
 not they have shewed so much repentance *rationes e-*  
 at the least? could not they have put on sack- *rant Iudei*  
 cloth on their loins, and poured ashes on *propria*  
 their heads if they would? they might have *quàm Tyrii*  
 done so much at the least, and honoured the *et Sidonii*  
 workes and Preaching of our Saviour with an *idcirco à*  
 outward honour at the least. You that have *scrutatore*  
 such abundant teaching as ye have, ye might *cordium*  
 honour the Gospel with some outward honour *corripitur.*  
 at the least, that would be more commend- *Doct. Prid.*  
 able *lect. de*  
 able *med. sci-*  
 able *ent p. 65.*

able, which most of you will not.

3. *Argu.* Thirdly, because otherwise there *would be no room for the sword of the Magistrate*; if a man could omit no more *finn* than he does, then what means our Pillories and Gallows, &c. and other punishments upon Malefactors? will any man be so vain as to say *Achan could not chuse* but take the *Babylonish garment*? certainly he might have let it alone if he would: why hast thou troubled us? saies *Joshua*, Josh. 7. 25. Alas, he was not able to answer, oh Sir, I *could do no otherwise*! No, no, he might have omitted it, and therefore the Law of man is favourable to such as offend against their wills; it does not hang such as kill against their wills.

4. *Argu.* Fourthly, because though a carnal man cannot put off the old man, nor shake off the dominion of sin in general, nor deny himself, but his very nature is sinfull and fleshly, he does naturally sin, yet it is not his nature to commit this sin at this time, and in this manner; the wickedest man under Heaven goes about his sin with *previal deliberation*, and a most free disposition of the means; the drunkard goes freely into the Ale-house, and calls freely for a Jugg, or two or three, as his lust is; his Host he freely suffers these disorders in his house, and freely goes to the Tap and does draw it, &c. *Ephraim did willingly walk after the Commandement*, Hos. 5. 11. The wicked King of Israel commanded them that will-worship at Bethel, and they did freely and willingly obey it. Pilate willingly contented the people.

people, and therefore he scourged our Saviour, Mark. 15. 15. For though all this was done by the determinate counsel of God, yet Gods counsel put no simple necessity upon his will, he did freely and willingly do it; the wicked they turn the Grace of God into wantoness, Jude 4. Mark, the Grace of God; Grace whereby they might do more good than they doe, and avoid more evill than they do. Its true a wicked man is the servant of sin, and cannot but sin, he is naturally a servant of sin; of sin I say, but he is voluntarily and freely a servant of this sin, for the Lord gives him reason, and counsel, and good motions, and many common graces, whereby he may be freed from this or that Act, but he will not, he will break out into these and these filthy passionate words now and then; say reason what it will, and common grace what it will, he will do it, he will do this, and he will do that. I confesse, that when a wicked man is desperate, and given up of God, then it is otherwise, then his will is so greedy, that he cannot take it off; but he is the more inexcusable, because his will is then double.

Fifthly, *A wicked man can do more good, &c.* for a godly regenerate Soul may avoid more sin<sup>5</sup> than he does. Though God have freed him from the slavery of sin, and he is become the servant of righteousness, Rom. 6. 18. nevertheless they may do more good than they do, and avoid sin a great deal more than they do; and what man will say that David could not otherwise chuse but commit that adultery which he

Argu.

*Insu-  
pera-  
biliter mo-  
vet, quam-  
vis sit ali-  
qua resist-  
entia.*

did, and that *murder* which he did? I appeal to your *consciences* ye souls that are *godly*, When ye pray forgive us our *Trespases*, doe not yee acknowledge with all that ye have been wanting to the grace of God? Do not ye confesse it with shame that you have given away to sundry *temptations* that by the grace of God ye might have overcome? And that ye have omitted many a good opportunity, that by the grace of God ye might have made *use of*? I deny not but God does irresistibly convert his Elect at the first, and *infallibly* carry them on to the *end for the main*, but in *particulars actions* he does not so; but though their wills be now free by grace, yet they may freely sin, even then when they transgresse; and so they are forced to confesse they might avoid more evil than they do, and do more good than they do.

Again, A *wicked man* may do more good than he does, and avoid more evil than he does, I prove it by *induction upon his conscience*;

By these particulars.

First, for the *outward Acts of sin in the members*; thus all profane persons, drunkards, &c. ye are all convinced undeniably in your *consciences*, these are sinnes in the very outward members; *voluntas* it is *domina membrorum*; can ye say ye cannot passe by an *Ale-house* when ye turn in? ye cannot come unto *Sermons*? your own *legs* they shall judge you; can you say you cannot give over your oathing and

lying

lying? &c. your own Teeth and Lips shall judge you, &c. If you do not root out these sins, its without doubt because ye *will not*. The Lord hath made all the outward man at the *command of the will*, and therefore if the outward man be out of order, tis because ye will *μολοῖς ὅν λέγεται ὅτι οὐν τάλαντον ἔχω ἰδεῖν δύναμαι ποιῆσαι* says *Chrysost.* Let no man say I have but one Talent, and I have no power to be good; a Talent hath power to go for a Talent, and 12 d. for a shilling, and if it do not, tis because ye *will not*. Hast thou not power over thine own outward members vouchsafed thee of God? the Lord in mercy lets thy will have a despotical power over thy members, as the Moralists call it, and why canst thou not bridle them? as *Christ said* to the Officer that smote him, *If I have spoken well, why smitest thou me.* John 18. 23. Couldst thou not have held in thy fingers? thou art inexcusable then for all thy profane sins.

Secondly, *Thou hast natural affections in thee*, and by them thou mayst do more good than thou dost, and shun more evil than thou dost. Thus all civil Professors are left inexcusable: Canst thou not get more strictnesse of walking, though not for love unto God, yet for love unto thyself? be more frequent in good duties for hope of Heaven, and for fear of Hell; that's better than nothing; better do them so than not at all. What cannot a man do for self-love and for fear? there is never a duty of Religion, but a man may every day do for love unto himself and for fear. God hath left

*Amor sui  
ipsius est  
objectum  
Amor Dei  
ipsius est  
tantum ob-  
jectum ter-  
minativum  
Amor Cal  
consc. de  
charit er-  
ga Deum.*

lest these affections in thy Soul on purpose. I know this is not enough; but what of that? Why dost thou not go so far as thou mayest? what aileth thee that thou canst not tame down thy pride for fear of Gods Judgements, and bridle thy base passions for fear of Hell? It is not unknown that God hath vowed to destroy all the workers of iniquity: Tis not unknown that he hath prepared Hell for such as thou art, as long as thou livest as thou dost: Thou knowest this is true, and thou knowest God will be as good as his word, and thou art not able to abide it. Why dost thou not curb thy proud stubborn lusts for fear of this Hell? That's better than nothing; if thou canst not do it for love, yet why canst thou not do it for fear? hast thou not as much reason as a brute creature, that is greedy of meat, yet a whip-stick is able to scare him from it? an horse is desirous to stand still, yet a spur and a rod is able to make him go faster; and is not Hell more fearfull than all rods? Why dost thou not take heed for fear, lest God should send thee to Hell? a sinner and a hypocrite are inexcusable herein, for Hell may fear them; the sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulnesse hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Esay 33. 14. who of us is able to dwell with everlasting flames? and hypocrites may go so farr; fear Hell, and abstain from a million of sins, for fear of these everlasting burnings: canst thou say thou canst not resist sin for fear of Gods judgement? No, thou canst resist sin for fear of

Quis poterit  
 rit? as  
 Montanus  
 hath it.

of lesser evils than so; the fear of mens seeing thee can keep thee from committing adultery in the market-place; and cannot the fear of God restrain thee from it in private? thou darest not transgresse the *Kings Lawes* for fear of the Gallowes; and cannot the fear of Hell restrain thee from *transgressing of Gods? Gods displeasure* is greater than the Kings, and thou knowest it: God is truer in his Law than any mortal man, and thou knowest it: and fearest thou not me? *fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my presence?* Jer. 5. 22. Canst thou say thou art not able to fear him so much as servilely? that is not so, for when thou art sick, and ready to dy, then thou wilt fear him, then Oh thou wouldest fain become a new creature, and all out of fear of the great God; and canst thou not now? No, no, now here be pleasures to be had, and thou wilt have them; here is the World, and thou wilt cark; here is businesse, and thou wilt be doing, and thou wilt not finde leasure for God. No, thou wilt not; canst thou not do this that *God bids thee, at least out of fear?* this is nothing but a lye of *Satan*, thou wouldest do them all for fear of a man. Suppose there were Lawes made that every man who does not pray in his Family Morning and Evening should assuredly be hanged: whosoever swears an Oath, should be hanged as soon as he hath sworn it: Whosoever breaks out into any bitter rayling speech, should suffer death. Suppose I say to all the duties of *Religion* it were death to omit them, and the King had made  
such

*Such a certain sure Law*, I dare say there would be many millions of Professors more in England than there are; rather than ye would be gibbeted, many sweares would never swear more; many lyars never ly more; many profane householders never omit Prayers in their Families more; and couldst thou do this for fear of a man? why canst thou not then do it for fear of the great God?

3 *Confid.* Thirdly, *The Lord hath given thee natural counsel, and natural reason and prudence*: Oh sayest thou, I am tempted before I am aware, and the passion is up before I am aware, I cannot help it for my life. *No, I believe thee, when the Devil is once up, there is no allaying that foul Fiend for the present.* Thou canst not immediately allay it. But why canst thou not prevent it with *counsel and deliberation*? the very *Heathens have done this*, and thou hast advantage of all Heathen. God hath given thee not only reason in thy head, and a natural conscience in thy breast; but also *direction in his word* to prevent it, and if *thou dost not, thou wilt not*: are the lusts of thine appetite violent? why then dost thou not fore-cast for to reign them? why dost thou not abstain from going to Feasts a while? why dost thou not stint thy Trencher with so much? if thy lusts be on fire why dost thou feed them with fuel? Are the lusts of anger and wrath predominate in thee? thou rapst out an Oath before thou art aware; why then dost thou not as *Chrysostome would have thee, set forfeitures for every Oath*? Why dost thou not intreat Gods people severely

verily to reprove thee, and exact a fine of thee for every *misgoverned word*? Why dost thou not bawke such acquaintance as may occasion thy Tongue to cast out Oaths? Why dost thou not club down thy lusts with argument upon argument? shall I be touchy to be damned, and proud to be damned, &c. *even arguments of selfe-love* are able to knock them down. I do not know how; No? that's because thou wilt not know, *They know not neither will they understand*, Psal. 82. 5. So thou knowest not, neither wilt thou understand; that's the reason thou still *walkest in darknesse*; why dost thou not oppose thy lusts at first rising? *non obtinebis ut desinat, si incipere permiseris*, sayes *Seneca*; thou canst never get victory except thou be here first in the Field. The Lord hath given thee counsels on this fashion, why dost thou not use them? only because thou wilt not; hast thou impediments? *Clarancus* had them too, but he overcame them sayes *Seneca*, Why dost not thou? if thou wilt not; thou dost willingly perish; thou mightst do more than thou dost, but thou wilt not; and thou mightest shun more than thou dost, but thou wilt not.

Fourthly, because thou wilt say all these things are but *natural* and *moral* and *civil*, I may Perish for all these; but alas I am not able to do any thing spiritually: I cannot believe, I cannot repent; though this be very true, yet thy plea is no excuse; for though they be *natural*, yet *they are first*. *First that is in order which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritu-*

1 Kings  
2. 29.

*spiritual*, and if thou stickest there thou stickest at a will-not. The Lord hath taken a sufficient course to humble thee, and thou wilt not be humbled; thou sayest thou canst not obey spiritually, I grant it, its most true: nor repent spiritually: why then wilt thou not be humbled that canst not? As God said to Pharaoh, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thy self before me?* Exodus 16. 3. There is external humiliation, as *Ahab's* humiliation, thou mayest com to, before that humiliation thou canst not expresse: why art thou not humbled with that which thou mayst?

First then, why dost thou not see thy case to be *damnable*? Dost thou not know that judgment is past upon all to damnation? *Rom. 5. 18.* *All men are damned out of Christ.* Whosoever is not a new creature, is not in Christ, but is a damned man to this day: thou knowest the Lord himself doth say thus: what hinders thee now from deducting a particular therefrom? If upon all men, then upon me; if all be damned to this day that are not *new creatures in Christ*, then I am a damned man to this hour: This *Logick* God doth vouchsafe thee; why dost thou not reason on this fashion? I am a damned man and a damned woman to this day: if thou wouldst be brought to this passe there might be some hope of thee, *but thou wilt not*; thou wilt scrape up some hopes or other, thou wilt not believe this. Believe thus, *sayes God*; but I will not, sayest thou, no, thou wilt have thy lust still, and thou wilt not believe this; if thou wouldst be-  
lieve

lieve verily thou art a *damned man*, because thou art not a *new creature in Christ*, may be thou wouldst never have done till thou art one, thou wouldst forsake all, and follow *Christ in all things*, but thou *wilt not*.

Secondly, but I cannot sayest thou: why then wilt thou not *despair in thy self*? a man must despair as he is, otherwise he can never get into *Christ*: as long as a man lives and does after the flesh, he can have no true hope of mercy or pardon, or any thing, no, he is a *dead man*, all the *Angels of Heaven* cannot help him; if there were a thousand Christs, he should perish without them; and why wilt thou not despair in thy self? despair? God forbid. I'll never despair while I live, God is more mercifull than so, and I hope I need not despair. *Christ died for sinners, and I were a fool if I should despair*. Thus thou pleadest with God for thy vain hopes; but why wilt thou sayes God, why wilt thou plead with me? thou hast transgressed against me, *Jer. 2. 29*. Thou pleadest for hopes, and liest in thy sins, why wilt thou? mark, the will is set on it, thou wilt plead: *thou mightst despair of thy self, but thou wilt not*, and therefore thou wilt wilfully perish.

Thirdly, but I cannot pull down mine own heart, nor master mine own will sayest thou; No? Why then canst thou not go and resigne it to God? Lord, here is a proud heart, I cannot humble it; Oh, here is a stony heart, I cannot break it; Lord do thou: here is a rebellious heart, I cannot subdue it; Lord do thou:

thou; but thou wilt not resign up thy heart; thou wilt not set about it as well as thou canst; they will not frame their doings to turn unto God, Hof. 5. 4. they will not; so thou wilt not frame thy self to do it as well as thou canst. And therefore thou dost willingly go on, and thou art wholly inexcusable before God; and when he sends thee to Hell, thou shalt know thine own will brought thee thither. Thou mightst reform thine outward man, but thou wilt not; thou mightst bridle thy lusts and thy passions, but thou wilt not; thou mightst take a thousand good opportunities, but thou wilt not. And therefore thou hast no excuse before God, thou dost willingly perish. Its true thou canst not, may be; but necessity is not it, but thou wilt not: indeed if thou didst every day labour to fight against thy lusts, and resist to the utmost, and couldst not, then it were necessity, but thou dost not, nay thou wilt not. He that resisteth and then cannot, he he may plead, Lord, what a wofull necessity of sinning am I in; but thou givest way to thy lusts, and therefore thou art inexcusable, and thou dost willingly perish.

Repugnan-  
ti non vo-  
lenti neces-  
sitas est.  
Sen.

### The second Ground.

THE second now followes. Every wicked man is slothfull and negligent. Thou evill servant and slothfull, sayes Christ, Matth. 25. 26. Thou hast been lazy with the Talent I gave thee. I gave thee preaching and teaching, and thou hast been lazie to hear it. I have given thee

thee knowledge of that which is good, and thou hast been lazie to improve it. I have pul- led thee to Prayer by the motion of my *Spirit*, and thou hast been lazie at the duty: Thou e- vill and slothfull Servant, I have given thee many a sweet oportunitie *to be rid of that base lust* that thou art most addicted unto, and thou hast been lazie to take it. This is another ground of this Doctrine. Now if this be so, thou must lay the blame on thine *own will*, and not on *Gods denying thee power*; Because sloth is a fault of the will. I cannot call him a sluggard, that sticks at a *can-not*, but only him that sticks at a *will-not*. He that labours and strives as much as he can, none will call him a sluggard, but him that can labour more and *will not*. *Sloth is a voluntary fault of the will: How long wilt thou sleep O sluggard? Prov. 6. 9. How long wilt thou? its not a fault of impotency, but of will.*

*1 Demon.*

*Five Demonstrations to prove this.*

First if thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou dost only *imagine a company of can-nots*. I cannot do as I would, sayst thou: No, why then art thou slothfull, to make more imaginary *cannots*? A slothfull man ima- gines more *cannots* than there be. I cannot go this journey saies he, I shall be weary, I shall be robb'd, I shall fall off my horse; I cannot travel it: the way of a slothfull man is a hedge of *Thorns*. But the way of the righteous is made plain saith Solomon. The slothfull man he ima- gines theres a thorn-hedge in his way. I shall be  
prickt

Prov. 15.  
19.

prickt, I cannot over it; what? is there a Thorn hedge in the way? No, for the righteous that goes it, he finds it plain, he sees none, no; there is no such Thorn-hedge in the way, but he does imagine one; and *therefore his will-not is his let, not his cannot, for he does but imagine a cannot*. So dost thou say, I cannot do thus and thus; why then art thou slothfull to imagine more cannots, and Thorn-hedges than there are? I cannot live then. Oh I cannot go so often to prayer, and if I should do so as you say, I should be houted at up and down; you tell me I am a Hellhound for my pride and my passions; Oh If I should believe this, I should never have merry day more. Alas all these are *but imaginary cannots, imaginary Thorn-hedges*. I cannot be so strict, neither can I put it up. I say thou dost but imagine a company of cannots, and therefore *thou wilt not*.

2. Demonstration. *If thou be slothfull to good duties, then thou makest every little difficulty a cannot; nothing but an impossibility is a cannot*. But if thou beest slothfull, thou makest every little difficulty a cannot. I cannot turn mine own heart, nor break mine own heart: but why then art thou slothfull, to make every little difficulty a cannot? a slothfull man makes every little difficulty a cannot. *The slothfull man will not plow by reason of cold, and therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing*. He will not plow by reason of cold, he sucks at a very little difficulty, his fingers are so tender forsooth, they must not ake, his Toes

Prov. 20.5

Toes are <sup>to</sup> Lady-like they must not smart, because its a little difficult, therefore he will not do it; He will not Plow by reason of cold. Well, beg then and ye will; cannot you endure a little cold? yea, he could endure it, but it would be difficult: And therefore sayes the Text, he will not plow by reason of cold. *He does not stick at an impossibility, for then indeed he could not.* But the slothful man will not plow by reason of cold: He sticks onely at a difficulty, and therefore he will not; nay if he should labour soundly indeed, his very labour would keep him from being a-cold; the truth is, its the *labour of plowing that he is against*. And therefore every little cold shall serve for an excuse. So why art thou slothful to count every perty difficulty a cannot? Its an uncomfortable thing to be alwayes poring on my sins, I cannot abide it, its troublefom to be Tongue-tied. What not speak a word but onely with Warrant from Scripture? I cannot abide it; what never help my self at a dead lift, by telling a Lye? never right my self by a little Revenge? never comply nor sort with such and such old acquaintance, because they drop out an Oath now and then before they are aware? O I cannot abide it. What thus precise? I am not able to abide it. No? *cannot, cannot thy stubborn Will stoop to a little difficulty?* get thee to Hell, and see if thou canst abide that, and there thank thine own will for thy perishing.

3. Demonstration, If thou beest sloathful, 3. Demon.  
E then

then thou turnest thy very *Abilities* into *cannots*, not onely all difficulties, but also thine *Abilities* into *cannots*. Like a *Drone* that is lazy, he loses his *Abilities* that he hath. By much Eccles. 10. *Slothfulnesse* the *Building* decayeth. Alas, I am

18. very dead-hearted, sayst thou; nay, but O Man, the time was when God quickened thee at a Sermon, why didst thou let it decay? the time was when thou wert a little well affected, why didst thou let it decay? time was when thou wert soberer, and lesse given to Wrath and Passions, and why didst thou let these good Conditions decay? the Lord gave thee them heretofore, and thou hast played the Sluggard with them, and therefore now they are decayed. Thy quickning is decayed, thy sorrowes for sin decayed, thy meltings decayed, through much slothfulnesse the Building does

Pro. 1. 8, 6. decay. He that is Slothful in his Work, is Brother to a great Waster: So thou art a Brother to a great Waster, because thou art Slothful.

4. Demon. 4. Demonstration. If thou beest Slothful, then thou doest *Voluntarily* nail thy self unto *cannots*. There is many a sin that now thou art a slave too, that thou mightst have troden under thy foot, but now thou canst not; thou mightst have gone further and further on in Reformation, if thou hadst held on when thou wert going; like a Coach, its easier to make it runn on when once its going, than stir it, when once it stands still; and now thou canst not, now thou art nayled to it, like the Door to his Hinges. Now thou canst pray and pray

pray and grow ne're the better ; hear and read and ne're the holier : *As the Door turneth upon its Hinges, so doth the Slothful Man on his Bed.* Pro. 19. 24

The Door goes to and fro ; to it goes, and fro it goes, it goes may be all the yeer long, and still it hangs just upon the same Hinges, and after seven yeers travel, it hangs there where it did ; its nayled to its Hinges. So its with a sluggish heart : he goes to a Prayer and from a Prayer, to a Sermon and from a Sermon, to a good Duty and from a good Duty ; and still he hangs just on the same Hinges. He hath gotten no ground, is just where he was ; so thou art just at the same pass, after a thousand prayers, and a thousand Sermons, and millions of good Duties, still thou hangeest on thy old Duties, ne're the more pure to this Hour.

5. Demonstration, *Sloth is a lazy putting forth by halves of that power one hath.* 5. Demon. This also is the very Nature of Sloth ; when a Man hath more power than he shews, but he is lazy to put it all forth. The Scripture uses a Comparison of a Man that hides his Hand in his Bosome, and though he have Meat standing before him, yet he will not so much as bring it to his mouth. A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not bring it to his mouth. What ? why does he starve ? because he hath not any meat ? No, Pro. 19. 24, the Meat standeth before him : because he hath not any hands ? No, he hath a Hand in his Bosom : because his Hand hath the dead pulse, and he not able to stir it ? No, he

will not put it forth : *He will not bring it to his mouth*, sayes the Text. So when thou art *Praying*, thou wilt not put thy self forth; when thou art *reforming*, thou doest not put thy self forth; when thou art about any good service, thou dost not put thy self forth; here is a *Sabbath* before thee, and a Sacrament before thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; thou wilt not put thy self forth. *The Lord tells thee, this sin will break thy Neck*, and thou wilt not so much as reach it to thy mouth, nor apply it to thy heart; may be it would humble thee, and feed thee, but thou wilt not reach it to thy mouth; what a deal of power hast thou? but thou putttest it forth by the halves, when thou art examining thy Conscience, thou putttest thy self forth by the halves, thou mightst put thy self forth many degrees more, but thou wilt not.

Oh Beloved, this same point will *strike the World dumb before God, even this, why did ye not put your selves forth to the utmost?* Thou hast somewhat more in thee than by reason of thy lazinesse thou dost put forth.

Six Arguments  
to  
prove it.

*There is more than by reason of Sluggishness thou putttest forth.*

I. *Argu.* First, its a sign it is in thee, because when God does convert a sinner, he does not put in new powers and faculties into the Soul; he does not put in a new faculty of *thinking* and *Understanding*, and *willing*, and *affecting*, and *remembring*; No, the soul hath these faculties already, understanding already, and thinking already, and remembring and desiring already, and willing already,

already ; God does not put in new faculties, but turns them that are there unto himself, like a Watch out of frame, the Wheels are there still, the Spring still, and every parcel there still, but all out of frame, and the Artist sets them in frame; so the Soul hath them in it; True, it requires the *omnipotent power of God to turn all these faculties to him.* Notwithstanding thou dost voluntarily turn them unto other things, and not unto God. They are every one in thee, as thou art a Man. But God may not have them, nay & thou mightest put them to more than thou dost. Other things can have them *superfluously*, but God may not have them. (I intend not a power of doing the least good in a gracious manner, nor to ingage God to give thee grace only.)

Secondly, its a sign it is in thee. (I mean still so far forth as to demonstrate thee slothful.) I say it is a sign it is in thee, because thou canst shew as great power otherwise. When a Servant can run a Race for his sport, why will he not on his Masters Errand when he bids him? Its a sign it is in him, and he will not put it forth. Canst thou not spare an Hour every Day for private Prayers unto God, sometime for to meditate and belabour thy heart? Thou canst spare twice as much for thy Belly and thy Back, and thy profits. Canst thou not shed Tears for thy sinns? Thou canst shed Tears for madnesse, and wrath, and vexation. Canst thou not tell how to glorifie God? Oh my parts are very shallow, gifts very small, &c. but thou art wise to do evill, They

Jer. 4. 21.

*are wise to do evil but to do good they have no knowledge.* Its a sign it is in thee, *but thou wilt not.* Thou canst not speak for God, thou canst not be angry against sin, nor lay to heart the miseries of Gods Church? No; but thou canst finde thy Tongue fast enough for to Rail, and Clamour; and thou canst even burst with Anger when thou art crost. Its a sign its in thee, a sign there is Wit enough in thee, and Ability enough in thee to take pains. Thou hast it for *other things*, but thou wilt not *put it forth for the Lord.* Oh how does this provoke the Most High! *That strangers should devour all thy strength.* Like Ephraim, *strangers devoured all his strength.* God might have none of it, but strangers and strange lusts could have it: The World can have thy pains and thy cares; the things of the World they can have thy thoughts and thy strength, *and not I, says Christ.* As a Master complains of his refractory Servant, you can do it for your self, and do it for others; but you will not do it for me; *a sign it is in thee, but thou wilt not put it forth.*

Hos. 7. 9.

3. *Argu.* Thirdly, its a sign it is in thee, *for thou canst shew it to whom thou listest*; like a sluggard that will work at idle times; so thou canst serve God when thou hast nothing else to do. Like Pharaohs conceit of the Israelites, That they would serve God because they had nothing else to do. Ye are idle, *idle ye are, therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice unto God,* Because they had nothing else to do; So when thou hast nothing else to do with thy Tongue, then thou

Exo. 5. 17.

thou canst give it to God; nothing else to do with thy thoughts, then thou canst think of God; when thou hast no use of a lie, then thou canst tell truth, &c. A sign it is in thee; it is not the telling of the truth; it is not the speaking very gently and modestly that is not in thee to do, but thou wilt not put it forth; nay thou canst be soundly provoked while some are in Company, and yet still as quiet as may be, a sign it is in thee.

Fourthly, *its a sign it is in thee, but thou art 4. Argu.*  
*so sluggish thou wilt not put it forth, because the Rod is able to whip it out of thee,* Like a Boy that is idle and can say nothing, yet his Master is able to whip it out of him, then he can say it very roundly. So thou canst not think of these things, yet let God lash thee, and whip thee with *sickness*, or with the *Pangs of Death*, Then O I have been a Drunkark, and I have been naught, I have been wicked, and Oh if God would recover me, I would not for a World sin so as I have done: Then thou canst weep, and then thou canst crie, and then *O for the Minister!* A sign it is in thee, for a Rod puts in no new, but onely lashes up that which lay there; as the *Twigs* of the Rod have no *vertue* in them to put *Learning* into the Boy, but its a sign it was in him. Ah thou Wretch thou, thy Blood lies on thine own Head; why then dost thou not now put thy self forth? Thou canst, but Oh it kills thee to think now of taking pains after such things. It kills thee now to go to thy Beads and lie at weeping Crosse, and be so holy

E 4 for

forsooth. Oh it kills thee now to take pains hereabouts, like the sluggard, *the desire of the* Pro. 21 25. *sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labour.* He desires to have a *Crop*, but it kills him to go to the *Plough*; he desires to have his markets, but it kills him to go thither. So thou desirest to go to *Heaven*, but it kills thee to take pains; Mortification, Self-Denial, Repentance, Humiliation, Examination of Conscience, Reformation of life, Oh these kill thee to think of them. A sign much is in thee, but it kills thee to put it forth.

3. *Argu.* Fifthly, A sign it is in thee, because thou canst do a hundred times more then when thou art pleased; like a wilful lazy Servant, you could do it better if you were pleased, sayes his Master. So as long as thou art pleased thou canst be more Religious, a sign it is in thee. *Rhehoboham*, his first years were Religious; *Peter Martyr* observes, he was well pleased that same while he saw it was for the *establishing of his Kingdom*. And the *Levites* came to him, from *Jerobeam*, so long he was pleased, and then he was Religious, but afterwards not; and why not afterwards too? Its a sign it was in him, but he was *not well pleased*; So *Joash* did right in the sight of the Lord all the dayes of *Jehoiada*. Why? then he was well pleased with Religion, for it helpt him to root out *Athaliahs faction*, *Jehoiada* had been the saviour of his life, the help of him to the Kingdom, the Lord Protector of his Nonage, the establisher of his Scepter, All this while Religion

gion did please him, but afterwards he *would not do right in the sight of the Lord*; Why? because other things now pleased him better; but its a sign it was in him. They on the Rock, they could hear, and professe as long as the *Gospel* did please them, they heard it with joy, that pleased them well; Ye know *Luke 4.13* joy is a very pleasing thing; and then they could be forward to professe it; a sign it was in them, but in time of *affliction and persecution*, nay now the *Gospel* did not please them, and therefore they *fall off*. So thou canst love a Child of God as long as he pleaseth thee, nay thou canst commend him for his holinesse; O its a *credit* to thee to be acquainted with such a one: But when something does not *please thee*, then thou canst hate him in thy heart; All these are signes it is in thee, *but thou wilt not put it forth*.

Sixthly, a sign it is in thee, because thou *6. Argu.*  
*wilt shew it in Hell*; there Dives shall shew it was in him to have regarded a godly poor Lazarus, to *Luk. 16.28*  
*have respected the salvation of his five Brethren*; There he shall shew it was in him to fear Hell more than he did. Then the Wicked shall say, What hath Pride profited us? And what have Riches and Means advantaged us? Then they shall see it was in them not to count them for Hypocrites, and Fools and mad Men that were more Religious than themselves. We Fools counted their life madnesse, and we had them in derision; and lo they are received amongst the Saints, *Wisdom 5.3,4,5*. And therefore it is in thee; why then wilt thou not put thy self forth?

forth ? I say this will strike you all dumb before God at the last day; why would you not put your selves forth ? and how do you *stand lazing and idleing out the dayes of your own peace ?*

*Ye cannot have any one excuse.*

No excuse will serve impenitent sinners turn at the last day. First, Yee cannot say *no body hired you* : Indeed the carefullest Servant in the World must of necessity be idle when none will employ him; why stand you here *idle all the day long ?* No *Man hath hired us Lord, Matthew 20.6.* Mark, they have an excuse that they were never hired into the *Vineyard*. That was more necessary idlenesse; but you have been hired, nay you were *hired very early in the Morning*, and therefore why stand you here idle all the day long ?

Secondly, Now thou art in Gods Vineyard, thou canst not say *I cannot professe*, I cannot profit by Hearing, nor profit by Praying, &c. Thou canst not say so; For why dost thou not labour ? in all labour there is profit. Never did a Man labour but some profit or other he did get; but thou wouldst not labour, but thou stoodest lazing and idleing. Fain wouldst thou be saved; fain escape Hell and Damnation, and oh that this were to labour for it! Like the sluggard that desireth a Harvest, and yet is idle; *O utinam hoc esset laborare* : He lies loytering and playing, and oh that this were to labour! Oh that this were to plough and to sow! If his Bed were the Plough, and his Pillow the Teeme, he

he would then drive it well : So dost thou,  
*Utinam hoc esset resipiscere*, thou goest on mind-  
 ing the things of this Life, Carking and Caring  
 &c. *Utinam hoc esset resipiscere*, O that this  
 were to Repent, and this were to go to Heaven :  
 thou art negligent of Prayer, and Faith, and Ho-  
 linesse, *Christ Jesus save me*; Thus cries the  
 Drunkard, *Christ save me*, and thus the World-  
 lings *Christ Iesus forgive me*. Thus like a slug-  
 gard thou wishest; O that this were believing  
 and serving of God ! Like the sluggard I say, O  
 that this were to labour ! thou mightst profit if  
 thou woudst labour; *in all labour is profit*; but  
 thou wilt not labour, and therefore inexcusa-  
 ble. O what a speechless Creature shalt thou be  
 before God at the last day ! This is the second  
 ground of the Doctrine; The reason why a wick-  
 ed man does not turn unto God, is not because  
 he cannot, but because he will not. I say the  
 ground of it is this;

*Every wicked man is slothful and  
 negligent.*

Stir up your selves yee whose Heart the  
 Lord hath awakened; Though the wicked be  
 slothful, will yee be slothful also ? O what  
 infinite Reason hath the Lord to correct us,  
 every one of all ? *How wofully slothfull are  
 our hearts !* I cannot master my unruly Heart,  
 sayes one, and I cannot cast out this same hard-  
 hearted Devil : Thus we say like the Dis-  
 ciples of Christ, we could not cast him out. O  
 Faithlesse Generation; how long shall I be  
 with

Mat. 17. 21.

*With you saies Christ. Cannot cast him out? Why? he could go out by Praying and Fast- ing; So these same distempers of heart, these frozen-hearted Devils would go out soon e- nough by Fasting and Praying; But oh we are so lazy thereat, and so cold and so dead, and so drowfie, we do not take pains. There is teaching in abundance; and why can- not ye learn? There is misery enough on the Church, and why cannot we mourn? There is woe enough a comming, and why cannot we provide for't afore-hand? God will whip out these lazy weeds out of us, if we belong to him; O it provokes him! as Vinegar to the*

Pro. 10. 26

*Teeth, and smoak to the Eyes, so is the Sluggard to him that sends him. Ah thou lazy Drone, this 'tis to send a leader-heeld Drone of ones Errand; it makes the Master look as sorely on him, as if he had drunken a Porringer of Vinegar. So Beloved, this our sloth to good things it doth deeply provoke God; there is many a Mercy we lose, because of our sloth; many a Grace we never attain, nay many a Crosse and many a trouble do we get by reason of our sloth. Oh let us stirr up our selves, and blow up the sparks that are under the em- bers, or else it will be evil and bitter that God will make us to suffer. And you that live in your sins, let me tell you; ye can ne- ver look for Mercy, except ye shake off your sloth; ye may desire to be converted, and pardoned, and saved, and so forth; but the Soul of the Sluggard desireth and hath not: But the diligent shall be made fat. 'Tis the diligent, the diligent only*

onely that shall be fatted with grace ; but ye may desire all dayes of your lives but ye shall never have grace, except ye take pains. Nay, your own reines shall *torment you in Hell* ; Oh how did I idle out my time, and let slip occasions, and I could dye, and I would to hell, and I would not do otherwise, and woe is me that ever I was born, &c.

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*The third Ground.*

*A Wicked Man will not set himself to use all the means that he may.*

**H**E is not onely *sloathful* in the use of the same, not onely he will not do as much good as he may, but also he will not so much as use the means constantly in any fashion. I cannot saith he repent, nor be such a new Creature as you talk of; Why then wilt thou not use the means? This makes thee *inexcusable*. All the whole World both godly and ungodly have a cannot; indeed the ungodly their cannot is larger and begins sooner, but the godly their cannot is much lessened, and begins further of. The Lord inables them to go further than all the wicked of the World; but beyond that, there begins their cannot. I say all the whole World have their cannot; I call that the means of grace, which is between their can and their cannot. As prayers, and hearing the Word, and studying, and meditating,

*Liberum  
arbitrium  
liberatum.*

Col. 4. 6.

tating, &c. The Lord seeing all men in their *Cannots*, hath appointed such means as they *can*, whereby they are to seek unto God to do that which they cannot. Now a Child of God whose *Cannot* is in some measure healed by Grace, he can pray in Faith, and hear in Faith, &c. And therefore Prayer in Faith, hearing Gods Word in Faith, &c. are his means to get more: he cannot obey more, nor believe more, but he uses these means that he may. But a Wicked Man his *Cannot* is larger, he cannot Pray in Faith, and do these in Faith, and therefore the faithful doing of these Duties are not his means. I cannot do so, sayes he: No, but thou mayest set upon them all, and do them in as good manner as thou canst, that is thy means. Though thou canst no pray in Faith, yet thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are: Thou canst not conferr with Grace, but thou canst conferr about Grace every day: thou canst not repeat the Word to thy Household in Faith, but thou canst repeat in as good a manner as thou art able, that is thy means. Now, if thou wilt not use the means, thou stickest at a *will not*, and when thou dost perish, thou must thank thine own Will, thou stickest at a *will not*. The first question Christ askes thee is this, what canst thou do? As when the Sons of *Zebedee* begged to sit one on the Right Hand, and the other on the Left, this they could not, except God did vouchsafe them a new gift. But what can ye do? sayes Christ, *are ye able to drink of the Cup that I am to drink off, and be baptized with the Baptism*

*Baptism that I am baptized with?* We are able, say they, *Matth. 20. 22, 23. Ye shall drink, &c.* Mark, he puts them to do that which they can, and then bids them leave that which they cannot unto God. I say, the first question Christ asks thee is, what canst thou do? I cannot be a Saint, Lord help thee to mercy, &c. Yea, but what canst thou do? Canst thou not use these and these means I appooint thee? If thou wilt not do them, neither will I help thee. This is the nature of means, to be a means to that which one cannot. A Child of God can pray in Faith, but cannot master such a Lust, and therefore he prayeth in Faith that he may. He can hear the Word preached in Faith, but he cannot get his heart to it as he would, and therefore he heareth in Faith that he may. Doing these in Faith are the means; now this is not the means of the Wicked, for they cannot do any thing in Faith; but their means is to set about them at least that they may. I cannot pray in Faith, sayest thou, yea: but thou canst set up constant Prayers in thy Family though, such as they are: thou canst not cast off thy sins in Faith, thou mayst cast them off though; a Godly man may do these things in Faith, and therefore that is his means. But that which is his can is thy cannot; and that which is his means, thou must use means unto. Thou must pray that thou mayst pray in Faith, repeat the Word, that thou mayest repeat it in Faith, reform thy life, that thou mayst reform it in Faith; and seek the Lord, that mayst seek him in Faith. Now, if thou wilt not set upon  
the

Note.

This con-  
founds the  
Helena of  
the Armi-  
nians.

the means, thou stickest at a will not ; I confesse here is the difference, *the godly have a promise upon their using of their means, they using them in faith : but thou hast no promise, yet who know's what God may do ?* As the King of Niveveh said, Let's cry mightily to God ; let's cast away these and these sins, *Who knows if God will turn and repent ?* Jonah 3.9. He had no promise, he could not tell whether God would forgive. He would set upon the means, he would cry mightily, and it hit well, for God spared the City : if thou wilt not set upon the means, thou doest wilfully perish : and here I cleared two things, 1. That God appoints every man the means that he may use, he may use those means that God commands him as means. 2. That if he will not, he does wilfully perish.

*Arguments to prove a Wicked Man may use  
the means that God appointeth  
as means.*

I cannot hear the preaching of the Word saist thou, I am deaf, I cannot hear Sermons, then that is not the means: reading, which thou canst, and meditating, which thou canst, is thy means. Every man may use the means that God does appoint him as means.

1. *Argu.* First, because its the very nature of means to come between ones *can* and his *cannot*, and therefore they are called *media*, because they come in the midst between a mans can and his cannot. By what means may I go up to *London* ?
- Media.*

don ? flying in the Ayr is not any means. No, that is a *Birds* means and not *mine*, for I cannot do it ; but my means is going, if I have legs : or riding, if they be not able : or carrying, if I cannot ride. Every mans *mediums* come in between that which he *can* and that which he *cannot*, and he is to use them, that that which he cannot he may be enabled to do.

Secondly, because God does not *exhort men* like a company of stocks and stones, but as *men* that are *edifiable* by his words. If there were no means they could possibly use, thy were like stocks and stones. If they had no ears as means to let it in, no understanding as means to conceive it, no power of willing at least to set about it, then we should preach to a company of stocks. There must be some means propounded, that men are enabled to use (though by any power of their own they cannot do it graciously) or else as good preach to a company of stocks. Now God protests he draws men as men may be drawn : *I draw them with cords of a man*, Hof. 11. 4. That is, with such cords as a man may be drawn with : nor like a company of stocks and of stones : if ye have but the carnal reason of a man, these cords they would draw you. God draws you like men, with cords of a man. Indeed in the quickning of the heart, and in point of repentance, a man is no more active than a stone. But when hee draws you to the means, he draws you like men, and therefore ye may come if ye will, and if ye be but men, these cords are cords to draw men.

†

Thirdly,

3 *Argu.* Thirdly, because Gods anger is very reasonable; when a Master is angry with a servant, that may do a thing and yet will not, we call his anger a very reasonable anger. I know Gods anger is very reasonable, for things which thou canst not; because once he gave thee power; but when he commandeth the means, now this anger is very reasonable. We our own selves count his anger very reasonable in the like case; what will he not do it? No not use the means for to do it? Would not this anger any body? Say we so, for these things sake *comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Eph. 5.6.* That is for Adultery, for Fornication, for vain words, and vain hopes to be saved; for these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. He does not say for not being renewed, for not being converted, but for these things comes the wrath of God forth. He's angry for that, but his wrath comes generally forth upon men for these things, because they will not use the means; They will not give over those sins which are the hinderances to conversion. This is very reasonable; if a man were not able to do it, there would be some shew at least of unreasonableness in Gods anger; but there is not any shew of unreasonableness in his anger, when men will not buckle to the means which they may. When God commanded the *Egyptians* to submit and be humbled, they would not; he commanded them at least to use the means to let his people go, and they would not. You shall see how the Text sayes his anger now was very

very reasonable: there is a ſweet phraſe, *Pſal.* 78. 50. *He made a way to his anger*: in the Hebrew 'tis, he weighed a path to his anger. He weighed it in a *ballance*: mark how reaſonably and proportionably God is angry. He puts his anger and mens ſins in a ballance, and weighs out the right meaſure of anger. When a ſervant forceth a Maſter to be angry, whether he will or no, he cannot complain his Maſters anger is unreaſonable; he may go of his errands, and he will not, he may do his buſineſs, and he will not: if he cannot do the buſineſs it ſelf, yet he may uſe the means, and will not. Now his Maſters anger is very reaſonable, becauſe he forceth him to be angry: as the *churning of Milk bringeth forth Butter*, ſo the *forcing of wrath bringeth forth ſtrife*, *Prov.* 30. 33. He does even churn his Maſters paſſions, and he forceth the ſame, as a churmer forcing the Milk to become Butter, ſo he forces ones kindneſſe to become anger; and therefore the anger is very reaſonable. So God is very reaſonable in his anger: wilt thou not uſe the means to be quickned? Suppose thou canſt not quicken thy ſelf, but wilt thou not ſet about the means? This churneth the Lords anger, and his anger is very reaſonable.

Fourthly, Gods offer of his Kingdom to the wicked is ſerious: if they were ſenſeleſſe and quite dead, and could do nothing, his offer were not ſerious: ſhould a man offer an hundred pound to a dead carcaſe, here is an hundred pound for you, if you'll take it, i'll give it you, 4. *Arg.*

you, this offer were not serious, because the dead carcassee is not able to stir, but is senselesse. True, in matter of conversion it self, a man is as dead as a carcassee. Nevertheless he is not absolutely a dead carcassee to all use of the means; he hath the life of nature, and reason, and of sense, and therefore when God offers his Kingdom in the means, this offer is serious. Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, Prov. 1. 23. He speaks there even of Reprobates and all, and he seriously offers them his spirit, and therefore they might have gone about the means, but they would not; *vocatio dei est seria*, as our Divines do all say, and therefore the means he appointeth may be used.

5. Argu. Fifthly, because Gods reproofs are very equal; should a man reprove a criples for not running, this reproof were not equal, because he is not able to do it. I grant when Gods reproofs the wicked for being sinful, such reproofs are all equal; though they be not able to be without sin: but then equality is grounded upon something before, namely upon their voluntary apostacy and inability in Adam. But when God reproofs them for not setting about the means, his reproofs then are very equal, and the equality is grounded upon their wilfulness present; will ye not fear me? sayes God; I do this and this; mark his reproof is very equal. God reproofs Israel for not observing his Statutes, saying, the Statutes of Omri are kept. Mat. 6. 16. You can observe his statutes, why cannot you set about mine? he sets

sets up a Temple, you can go constantly to it, why cannot you go constantly to mine? The reproof was very equal. If thou wilt not set upon the means, thou art most equally condemned. I cannot Preach so often as some do, nor be so much resident as some are; No? Why wilt thou not give over one of thy two livings then? Thou art able to do that; if thou'lt not set upon the means, thy condemnation is equal. Thus I have confirmed this first Point, namely, that the wicked may use those means that the Lord commands them as means.

In the second place I shewed that this being thus, thy condemnation must be wilful if thou wilt not use all the means.

*Arguments to prove it.*

First, *The Lord will not help that man by a miracle to go that hath leggs to go and will not;* Thou sayest thou wouldst fain go to Heaven; tell me what leggs hath God given thee? What means hath he lent thee? If thou wilt not use them, the Lord will never help thee without. Had the *Israelites* had any means to have gotten over *Jordan*, as Ships or Barks, Boats, or Bridges, or Fords, and they would not, he would never have helpt them over without. You know the Lord parted the waters, *Josh. 3. 13.* but if they had refused the means, he would not have kept them on this manner without: if they had food sufficient in the *Wilderness* to eat, and they would not, hee would not have rained food down upon them;

had they had Shoemakers and Drapers, and Cloth sufficient to come by, and they would not, he would never have miraculously have helpt the garments from wearing. Its a tempting of God, when thou hast means and wilt not be diligent in them, to desire God to help thee without; thou wouldst have thy Children Gods Children, thy Family Christs Family; then use the means. Set up the constant invocation of Gods Name, Morning and Evening among them; set up Reading, set up Catechising, and every good thing: or thou canst never expect it. Wouldst thou be holy, and heavenly? then use the means; Talk of Heaven in thy meetings, reason about grace, inquire of good souls, and how may I come by an humble heart? How may I get Faith, and be lead by the Spirit? If thou wilt not be constant in the use of the means, all thy prayers to God are nothing but temptings. Thou art troubled with by-thoughts, thou sayst thou wouldst fain be delivered there-from; then use the means, be not so long without God every hour, pray every day oftner, strive in the duty the harder; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never help thee without. Thou art full of thy doubtings, thou sayst thou heartily desirest to be freed; then use the means, or thou lye: give over thy broad walking, thy broad acquaintance; those that have no more holiness in them than the stock are thy bosomest friends; if thou wilt not use the means, God will never assure thee without, nor convert thee without; if *Dives* his five Brethren will not hear

*Moses*

*Moses* and the Prophets, they shall have no miracle from the dead, *Luke* 16. 18. if God lend thee the means, he will not save thee without.

Secondly, God will not bate a farthing of the 2. *Argu.* price he sets thee at; when a Tradesman hath once set his lowest price, he will not go lower. Now the use of the means, are Gods lowest price, the Lord will not bate a farthing of that; wherefore is a price put into the hand of a fool? *Pro.* 17. 16. the means of grace are this price, and the price is in thy hands, when the Lord vouchsafes thee the means, hee'l not bate thee a farthing of this price. He sets this price on his mercies and graces, thou must use all the means; not as though grace might be valued; No, it exceedeth all prices; or as though grace were not free; Yea, its free and without price: its fit though that this price should be set upon the alms, that the proud beggar should choose to receive it; if thou wilt not give the price that God hath put into thy hand, thou art worthy to misse it; I will give so much, and labour so much, and pray so much, and reform so much. No, no; that will not do, Christ will have tother odd penny too, thy filthy speaking must off, and thy base passions and old curses must off, hee'l have thee stoop to all his holy means; wouldst thou have it cheaper? Mine own Children and Saints never had it cheaper. Not *Abraham*, *Isaac*, nor *Jacob*, nor *Paul*; they were fain to use all holy means, to abandon every lust, to set up every duty, invocation in their families,

meditation in their hearts, examination in their consciences, holy communication in mowthes, none of my Saints had it cheaper, And thou makest a mock of them for praying so much, and professing so much, so much hearing, and so much gadding after Sermons. &c. Well, well, i'le not bate thee one duty, nor one lust, nor one carnal desire, i'le have thee fet about all, or thou shalt never have mercy. Yea, but I cannot find in my heart to put up this, nor to be abridged of this; and shall *Christ* and thou part for one *single farthing*? Perish then, and go and thank thy will for it in Hell: God is resolved upon this price, and this is the lowest.

3. *Argu.* Thirdly, *God will never be brought out of his walk, thou canst never look that God should come out of his walk to shew thee any mercy, or give thee any grace.* Now the way wherein God walks is the *means of grace and of salvation*; There thou must look for God, or thou canst have no hope for to find him. Suppose a poor *petitioner* should come with his *Petition* to the *King*; he can never look to have the *King* come down hither to *Kochford* to grant it him; No, hee must go up to the *King*. The *King* is at Court at *White-Hall*, and there he may have him; if he will not go thither, he is wilful, and if his *Petition* be not granted he may thank his own will. So thou canst not look to fetch God out of his own walk, the *means of grace and salvation*, endeavour to obey him, prayings, cryings, seekings, &c. These and other means of *Salvation* are his

his walk, these are the wayes wherein they must wait to find God, if they would have him, *in the way of thy judgements have we waited for thee, Isa. 26. 8.* There the Godly wait for the Lord, in the way where his walk is; *he will not be spoken with, but only there in his walk.* If thou wilt not seek him there, thou maist thank thine own will, if thou missest him; ye that are negligent to hold out in Gods wayes, ye can never look to find mercy while ye live. Pray for mercy, and cry for mercy, and grone for mercy, ye must look to perish without it, if ye will not seek it in his wayes; you'l seek him in some, but you will not seek him in all, assure your selves then you shall misse of him; do you think the King will come to you, to grant your petitions? you must go up to him, and take him where hee is to be spoken with. *God will not be spoken with but only in his wayes; the Jewes received Sacraments enough,* every meals meat is a new Sacrament in the Wildernesse, afterwards they prayed Prayers enough, but I will not hear you saies God; nere tell mee of your seeking for mercy, *wash you, make you clean, put away from you the evill of your doing; learn to do well; come now and lets reason together, if your sins be as red as Scarlet, I'll whiten them.* Now hee be spoken with if you will come hither; What not erect his fear up in thy Family? not give over thy base carnal comforts? keep such disorders under thy roof? and in thy life swear still? and give place to the Devil still? cursed passions still? mock

mock at my Children still ? Dost thou walk in these wayes and hope to find God ? No ; as good cut off a Doggs neck, as give him sacrifice of Prayers, as long as you walk in your own wayes. *Esay* 66. 3. You must seek him in the wayes that he walks in, and not chuse your own wayes, hee'l never come out of his way for any of you all ; what shall I do Lord ? sayes *Saul*, he would fain have spoken with God there. No, no ; go to *Ananias*, &c. if thou wilt not seek him in his way, thou art well served if thou missest him.

I beseech you consider this point, you can never look to be saved, except you'l set your selves to do what you may, and use all those means that you may ; for though the use of the means does not save you, yet they are the way ; though not *causa regnandi*, yet *via regni* ; and if you will not constantly use them, you can never have his Kingdom.

#### *Reasons of it.*

First, because Heaven is an end, and an end can never be gotten without means ; the end is eternal life. *Rom* 6. 22. *eternal life* is an end, and therefore except the means be all used, you can never attain it.

Secondly, God hath annexed it to the means ; all Heaven and Earth can never separate them ; either use all the means that God hath appointed, or else he hath decreed it, ye shall never be saved. When he hath once appointed these and these shall be your means, these shall you use for it, ye shall never be saved without

without them. When God hath appointed their abiding in the Ship a means of their escape, you shall see what *Paul* saies, *Except these abide in the Ship, ye cannot be saved, Act. 27.* So 'tis for Heaven, except ye abide in the means, ye cannot be saved.

Thirdly, *Every soul must give an account before God, how he hath used the means,* Whether he hath used them all yea or no. And according as the account is he can give, so shall his judgement be. God hath sworn this, as I live saith the Lord : God hath pawned his own life upon this, that thus it shall be. As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confesse to God : every one of us all shall give an account unto God, Rom. 14. 11, 12. every one of us, God will exempt none, we must all be brought to an account for these things : will not thy heart bow to it ? As I live saith the Lord, I'll make every knee bow to it : I'll make you bow or I'll break you for ever : as good do it as not, for ye shall give an account whether ye have done it or no.

Fourthly, beloved, *God will not set up another door into Heaven for any man in the World :* either come in at this or you shall never come in. Heel never make another Bible : either be ruled by this or by none. Heel never chalk out another way : either go this way or chuse, and perish in thy wilfulness, The drunkards way shall never be his way : the worldings way shall never be his, nor the lazy Gospellers his, nor the carelesse professors his, hee'll never change

change waies, nor are *my waies your wayes*, Esay 55. 8. you must amend your waies, *Jer.* 7. 3. and come unto his way, or ye shall never escape the evil to come : can there be any reasonabler way than this ?

*Proofs.*

First, Some of the means that God hath appointed you may do them without labour, you may do them with ease : do but say, I will, and it is done : What labour is it to say, company-keepers shall not sit drinking in my house ? There is never an Alehouse in your Town, but if they will, they may root out disorders from their houses : their own wils do destroy them. Its no labour in the world to do this, and will ye not do it ? perish then, and thank your own wils.

Secondly, some of the means that God hath appointed, are easier than them, only that you would give way to another to do them : may be the wife would have prayers in the Family if the husband would give way. The *Minister* would teach you, if you would give way. The Lord Jesus might work many things in you, if you would give way : this is lesse than to will. You that have good Wives, who would reform sundry things, if you would give way, &c. I beseech you apply it particularly to your selves, your ruin is wilful if ye yield not, and will not give way.

Thirdly, Some of the means are yet easier, for some of the means of grace are better for you, even in your carnal and worldly respects. You'll say, that's the easiest of all for a man to favour him-

himself, and his flesh : As for example, the reforming of your gaming, dicing, carding in your Innes, your drunkenness and bezeling o're the pot; your pride, and your geygaws, and the like : would not this favour your purses, and be more agreeable to your very carnal respects? and therefore you that do not reform these, you pluck wilful perdition on your heads.

Fourthly, some of the means of grace, its harder to omit them than to use them : Many of you meet with more hardships in the omission, than you could light upon in the practice of them : I need not instance the particulars, they are very familiar.

Fifthly, some of the means of grace, be they hard, yet they are but hard : they are not impossible for you to use. They will ask no more than a little labour and diligence, and therefore omitted only by reason of *wil-nots*.

I hope by this time you see clearly the truth of this ground. If ye will not set your selves to use the means of grace and salvation, when ye die, you must needs lay the blame on your wils : And why will ye so ? *Why will ye die ? O house of Israel.*

But notwithstanding the evidence of this truth, *The wisdom of the flesh, which is enmity against God*, fills carnal minds with many objections against it : from all which I shall endeavour to vindicate it, by answering them all in order.

The

1 Object. **T**He first objection is drawn from those Scriptures which say they cannot.

2 Object. From their own willingness, they would, but they cannot.

3 Object. Is from their own desires, they desire to do it, but they are not able.

4 Object. Is from their resolutions, they purpose, but whether they will or no, they are fain to break their good purposes.

5 Object. Is from their good endeavours (as they say) they labour against their sins, and yet they are transported into them, *to swear before they are aware, to be overtaken in company, &c.* We will answer them in order.

1 Object. *answered* As to the first Objection from the Scriptures, which say they cannot, I answer:

There are  
five cannots in  
Scripture:

*Indeed the Scripture speaks of five cannots.*

1 Cannot. First, of a *natural cannot*: every man is born by nature under a *cannot believe*, and a cannot see God: But there is difference between thy cannot repent, and thy *doest not repent*: there is difference betwixt these two. The cause of *thy cannot* is one thing, and the cause of *thy doest not* is another. The cause of *thy cannot* is the carnalnesse of nature: but the cause of *thy doest not*, is the wilfulness of thy will. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse to him: neither indeed can he, for they are spiritually discerned,*

1 Cor.

1 Cor. 2. 14. Where the Apostle makes a different cause of a natural *mans cannot*, and his *does not*: when he speaks of his *cannot*, he tells us the cause of that is because grace is spiritual and he is carnal, Neither indeed *can he*, because they are spiritually discerned: but when he speaks of his *does not*, you see he alleges a different cause of his *does not*, The natural man *does not* receive the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishnesse unto him: He counts them all foolish: He is so *wilful* in his own carnal reason, that he counts it folly to deny it: thou canst not do thus and thus dost thou say? Why then wilt thou count it folly to do so? when a man crosses thee of thy will, thou count'st it but folly to put it up: I were a fool if I should be so precise as some be: I were a fool if I should not suffer a little disorder in my house, as long as I gain by it. This is meer *wilfulness*: this, and not a *cannot*, is a cause of thy *doest not*. Thou canst not indeed because thou art carnal, but thy *cannot* is dead and not operative: thy will is the cause of thy *does not*: Like the *wilful blind man*, He was blind and would not open his eye-lids. He could not see, but his *cannot lay dead*, for he would not open his eye-lids: his *cannot is not operative* till he will open his eye-lids. If he could see, yet he could not till he would open his eye-lids: so thou wilt not open thine eye-lids.

Secondly, the Scripture speaks of a *deliberate cannot*, when a man cannot do a thing, *only because he cannot find in his heart to do it.*

Thou

Thou canst not repent of this and that sin, and forsake it, the truth is, thy cannot is this, *thou canst not find in thy heart to forgo it.* Such a course is profitable and pleasing to thy flesh, thou canst not find in thy heart to abandon it, thou canst not find in thy heart to be friends with such a one; to part with thy vanities, or to abridge thy self of thine angry speeches when thou art stirr'd, &c. Thou canst not find in thy heart to do it. As the *Jewes, you cannot believe,* sayes Christ, because *ye seek honour one of another,* *Joh 5. 44.* they would fain be well thought of, of all their acquaintance, and therefore they could not find in their heart to believe in Christ. Oh that would make them to be out of favour with the *Pharisees*, and to be counted basely of in the World; Therefore they could not find in their heart to believe; now this is no excuse; thou canst not turn unto God, thou canst not find in thy heart to part with thy lusts, this is thy cannot.

3. *Cannot.*

Thirdly, the Scripture speaks of a *judicial cannot*, as a Rogue cannot go, because for his *loytering the Magistrate hath lockt him in the stocks*; This does not excuse thee one jot, shall the villain be wilful in his loytering, and then complain of the Magistrate that he is not able to go about his work? I cannot go about my work sayes he; and who bad him be so idle as not to go about it, when he might? Thou hast gone on, may be, wilfully in thy sins, and now the *Lord hath insisted a judicial cannot upon thee.* Thou canst

canst not come out of thy sins, nay, the Lord hath cast this *cannot* upon thee in judgement; he hath set thee in the stocks for thy wilful security. As the wicked *Jews*, they could not believe, saies the Text, because *Isaiab* saith, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardned their hearts,* Joh. 12, 39, 40. Could they excuse themselves for their cannot? No, the Lord had set them in the stocks for their wilfulness and security. They could not believe, for they had wilfully provoked the Lord to cast this cannot upon them in judgement.

Fourthly, the Scripture speaks of a com-<sup>4</sup>Cannot  
pounded cannot. A cannot in *sensu composito*, as we call it; a cannot in a compounded sense. As a Drunkard cannot tender his Family, his poor wife and children. No, as long as he lies blowing on the Ale-bench he cannot, in a compounded sense he cannot. *Aristotle* sets it out by sitting; he that is sitting cannot walk, that is, as long as he is sitting he cannot walk. As *Christ* saith of a carnal man, *he cannot be my Disciple*: he cannot in a compounded sense. *He that commeth to me, and hates not father and mother, and wife, and children, yea and his own life, cannot be my Disciple*, Luke 14. 26. he cannot indeed as long as he stands upon these terms, My father will not love me, and my mother will not like me, if I should be one of your Disciples; my friends would not own me: I must do as I do, or I cannot keep my wife and children. Indeed as long as thou standst on these terms thou canst not be a Disciple of Christ; thou canst not in a compoun-

*Impossibile est sedentem ambulare.*

ded sense; but if thou wouldst divide it thou might' it; *no Man can serve two Masters*, Mat. 6. 4. Mark, compound them together, and he cannot. But if he would give over one, he might serve the other. Thou canst not thou saiest. No; I yeeld thee in a compounded sense thou canst not, thou canst not as long as thou art thus carelesse as thou art, as long as thou favourest thy self in such and such lusts, thou canst not. The compounding of thy security and lazinesse with Religion, that is the reason why thou canst not, this is it that makes our prayers hard, and our repentings hard, our believings. and all our performances hard; because we would fain be compounding. We have much ado to Pray, our hearts can hardly be brought to wrastle, much ado to be humbled, our wils will hardly stoop; if it were not for *these compoundings these duties were easie*. And what excuse hast thou hence? none at all: for its a cannot only in the compounded sense that thou makest it.

Note.

5 *Cannot* Fifthly, the Scripture speaks of a *humbling cannot*, a cannot not to bolster thee up in thy excuses, but only to humble thee, that thou maist be driven out of thy self unto God. A servant cannot live except it be his Masters pleasure to take pittie on him; Is this any pretence to him to langer his Master? or to be negligent of his Masters commands? nay, rather it forceth him to be so much the more careful to obey him, and to be humble before him. So the Scripture saies, that thou canst not without God, except God shew mercy on thee, to convert

vert thee and save thee, thou canst not be accepted of him. *All this is to humble thee, not to help thee with excuses.* Tush I cannot do as his Ministers do bid me, I cannot mortifie these sins, I cannot be so strict, this is too much preciseness you speak of. *O murmur not, this cannot is only to humble thee; murmur not among your selves.* No man can come to me except the Father draw him, *Job. 6, 43, 44.* This is no reason why thou should'st murmur or cavil, or be stubborn as thou art, thou canst not come at Christ except the father take pitty on thee to draw thee. Thou hast so much the more reason to be humbled, and not to go on wittingly and wilfully as thou doest. Canst thou not be holy, and saved, except he be pleased to pitty thee? in what a woful case then art thou to provoke him as thou dost? So much shall suffice for thy first Objection, drawn out of the Scripture.

*The second thing thou objectest, is thy willingness; thou wouldst, as thou pretendest, but thou canst not.*

I answer thee for this.

First, may be its the will of thy conscience, and not the will of thy heart; thy heart is carnal and unacquainted with God, and so its contented to be, only thy conscience would have thee grow better and more heavenly; but thy heart will not yield; and therefore all thy wilings are nothing but deludings; they are only the wilings of conscience and not of thy heart. Thou art chafing and fretting every foot, thy conscience tells thee thou shouldst

2 Object:  
answered

not, thou art praying carnally every day; when thou hast done, conscience saies thou shouldest pray holier than so, *conscience would, but thou wilt not*, conscience would have thee get assurance for Heaven, but thou wilt not be at the pains. Alas, this makes thee inexcusable, for now thou condemnest thy self, and yet wilt sin; thou art inexcusable O man whosoever thou art that judgest, for *wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self*: Rom. 2. 11. mark, when a man condemneth himself he is inexcusable. (I do not now quote it for the particular the Apostle does instance there for judging another,) for the truth is the same, whatsoever sin we do instance in, the truth is this, that *Paul* grounds his speech on. He that condemneth himself in a sin, and yet will go on in it, that man is inexcusable. What now hast thou gotten by thy plea? thou wouldst, thou saiest; this makes thy sin to be worse, in that thy conscience would, and yet for all that thou wilt not.

Note.

Secondly, may be its a copulative will; thou hast a will to repent and be godly, but it is with a complative will. Repentance and some lust, godliness and some lust; thou wouldst fain please the Lord and thine own lust too, be religious and proud too, believe in Christ and covet too, and be vain too, &c. Thou hast a will, but it is a copulative will, to serve God and do this too; Pish, cannot I serve God and do this too? No, no; this same copulative will is a flat contraction. Couple light and darkness? *Christ and Belial*? 2 Cor. 6. 15. Its a

con-

contradiction to imagin to couple them, for they cannot possibly be coupled. And therefore for this same copulative will is nothing but a mockery, and the truth still is this, thou wilt not?

Thirdly, May be thou hast a woulding will, this is no will, but onely a velleity; so thou hast a woulding will. I would do as well as any other, but I cannot; to speak properly, this is no will, for its onely that will wherewith fools will things impossible; I would I were at *London*, with a wish saies he; I would I could fly as well as an *Eagle*. These things are impossible, and therefore its no will, but meer folly; thus may be thou wiltst ~~gare~~, I would with all my heart I could do as God saies, God knowes my heart, my will is good, I would be better than I am; And yet thy Conscience can call for something or other to be mended, and thou wilt not. This is an impossibility, and therefore no will; like the Fool that would sit in his Chair, I and would I were at *London*, he would fain be at *London* and sit still. So thou fittest at the same passe, I would I were in Christ; thou wouldest fain be in Christ, and yet thou art loth to stir out of that base temper thou art in. This is an impossibility, a folly and no will; woulding and no willing. I grant the Saints of God have their wouldings, and their would does go futher than their will, their will is absolutely set to be holy, and they would be holy. Their will is deeply to be humbled, and they would be deeper; their would is grounded on a wil, they will in some measure &

Note.

When  
carnal  
men can  
discover  
no other  
blemish  
in the  
Saints,  
then they  
charge  
them  
with  
hypocrisie

they would go further. I will, Oh that I could will more. But thou that liest in thy sinful estate, *thy would is pure folly*. A would, grounded upon a *will not*, is foppish; the *Saints would is grounded upon a will*; but *thine, the root at bottom is this, thou wilt not*.

Fourthly, may be thou *hast a general metaphysical will*, but to come to *particulars*, there *thou wilt not*. I hate the Saints of God? God forbid? I'll never hate them while I live; and yet come to this Saint, and that Saint, *him thou wilt hate*; him? He is the veriest *hypocrite* in the Countrey, and keeps more ado than needs. Thus thy will is good to a company of metaphysical Saints in the clouds; but those that are Gods *Saints in particular*, *thou mockest*. I be stubborn against the Commandements of God? I will not be stubborn against them; yea, but *this and that Commandement thou wilt not observe*. Thou wilt not think best of them of whom thou shouldst, nor take up that carriage in meetings that thou shouldst; thou hast a good will to the Commandements in affliction, but thy will stands against the particulars of them. Generals are but Notions, when they are abstracted from the particulars. And therefore thy will is but a Notion; the will when it willeth indeed, willeth particulars, this particular duty, this particular Ordinance. Indeed good, in the general, is the object of the will, but when the will comes to will in the exercise of it, it pitcheth on particulars.

Fifthly, thou hast no true will, I speak still to the carnal, I say thou hast no true will, because

because if thou truly didst will, thou couldst ; if thou didst truly will to believe, and will to be a new creature thou couldst ; for the will it hath *potentiā executivā*, so far as it will, &c. It hath an executing power to go so farr as it wills ; if thou didst truly and really will to speak holily , thy will would make thy tongue to put in execution. If thou hadst a wil, thy will would command execution, *my tongue shall speak the praise of the Lord*, saies David, *Psal.* 119. 171, 172. *my soul it shall praise thee*, vers. 175. I grant the woulding of the will goes further than all execution can go, *to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not*, *Rom.* 7. 18. I quote this place the rather, because many wrest it to their own destruction. Oh saies a wicked man , I have a good will, I would as *Paul* saies , *but I cannot perform*, thus men mis-interpret this place ; for look how far *Paul* would, he could perform, for the will hath *potentiā executricem* and an imperative force over the man. What he did will, he did perform, he performed it in *his heart*, and *tongue*, and *hand*, &c. but he would draw his will forwarder than it was, but he could not, his very will was partly unwilling, he could not indeed perform so much as he would, that is, he could not draw on his will so strongly as he would. His will was not perfectly sanctified , no Saint in this World hath any perfect compleatnesse of will ; and therefore his performance is not perfect, because his will is not perfect. I say if thy will be converted to God, thou thy self art converted

ted to God, obedience ever goes as far as the will. And therefore if thou art willing, its certain thou art obedient; if ye be willing and obedient, saies the Text, *Isa. 1. 19.* whosoever is willing to obey, that man does obey in some measure, because the will hath power of execution, and the whole man at command. This is the reason why *Divines* say, that the *sincerity of the will is the condition of the Gospel*, wherfore if thou beest not obedient, neither art thou willing to obey; all the powers of thy soul, and all the members of thy body, thy will hath an *actus imperativus* to command them. Now if thy will will not command them to yield, thou art not so much as willing at all. If a Justice of peace should tell me, he would give me a warrant, and yet when all comes to all, he will not command his Clerk to write it, nor his own hand for to pen it, I see plainly he will not. Dost thou say, I would obey Christ, and I would deny my self, why then dost thou not command thy Clerk to write it? If thy will will not command tongue, Tongue thou shalt never talk so unprofitably as thou hast done, and Ear thou shalt never hearken after vanity as thou hast done; and thoughts, Thoughts ye shall never run at rovers as ye have done. If your will were but willing it would command your whole soul, *Soul thou shalt not do as thou hast done: as Davids will commanded his soul, O my soul bless the Lord, and forget thou not all his benefits, Psa. 103. 2.* Nay, he commanded all that was in him, *all that is in me bless his holy Name, vers. 1.* So if thou wert willing, thy will would

would command all thy soul ; soul thou shalt not be so seldom at the throne of grace as thou art, &c. Thus much of the second objection drawn from the will.

*Objection the third.*

*But thou desirest to do it , and therefore thou dost not stick at a will not.*

3.Object.  
answered

I answer thee, who can tell best what is in thee, God or thine own heart? verily the Lord that did make it is likeliest to know best. Now the Lord saies peremptorily, thou desirest not grace ; yea, and thy heart saies so too, and the Lord hears it, though thou hearest it not ; they said unto God depart from us, *we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, Job 21. 14. Nevertheless, because thou standest so stoutly upon it, that thou dost desire grace, I'll tell thee the reason of thy mistake.

First, thou hast putative or thinking desires, thou thinkest thou desirest, and therefore thou art mistaken ; like *Seneca's* young schollar, that said, he desired to be good. I do not say, saith he, he lies, but *putat se cupere*, He thinks that he desires ; so thou saiest thou desirest, I will not say thou lyeest, but thou thinkest thou dost so ; now alas thy thoughts are the vaineſt things in the World. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee ?* Jer. 4. 14. thy thoughts are very vain, there is no trusting in them. *Naaman* 2<sup>d</sup> King. 5. thought, *I thought*, saith he, but how wide <sup>3<sup>1</sup></sup> his thought was the story declares. *Haman* Ester 6. 6. thought, *he thought in his heart*, saies the Text ;  
but

## Wilfull Impenitency

but these thoughts came to nothing but a Gallows and a Halter. *Ishbibenos* thought, but you know what his thoughts did come unto; it fell fowl on his own head; nothing is more vain than the thoughts of carnal mens hearts; so thou *thinkest thou desirest*, alas thy thought is *but vanity*.

Secondly, thou hast *ignorant desires*, thou dost desire to be one of Gods Saints, thou desirest it ignorantly; for when thou comest to see who the Saints be, namely, such and such whom thou conceivest to be strange people and Puritans, then thou hast no desire to be one. Thou desirest to go *after Christ*, thou dost *ignorantly desire it*, for when thou seest thou *must take up his Cross*, then thou hast *no desire* thereunto; as the Prophet speaks of Christ in the person of the wicked, when we shall see him, *there is no beauty that we should desire him*, *Esay 53. 2.* thou desirest with ignorant desire before thou seest who he is; but when thou seest who he is, thou dost not desire him. Thou desirest his grace, thou *desirest to believe* and repent, and to *put up injuries*, these are ignorant desires before thou seest what they be; but when thou seest what they be, what the *injury* is that thou shouldst put up, then thou dost not *desire to put it up*; what the *sin* is that thou shouldst leave, then thou dost not *desire for to leave it*; when thou seest them, then thou dost not desire them. When we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should *desire him*.

Thirdly, thou hast *wandering desires*. Oh  
faith

saith one, you have a happy turn, you have good Preaching, and good means to be godly, and be edified. I desire to be so; but alas our Minister does not Preach, and we have a *dumb dog*; and I am in a very wicked place, If I were as you are, I should count my self happy. God knows, I desire heartily the edification of my soul; thus thy desires *wander after other mens cases; and thou wilt not stir out for thine own.* How dost thou desire to be edified, when thou wilt not stir out two or three miles to be edified? Thy desires are like wandering vagrants, that will be every where wandering, but only there where they should be. So thy desires go roving up and down, and you are happy, and he is happy, and thou art unwilling in the mean time to labour, where and how God hath appointed thee. These are none but gadding, wandering desires; better *is the sight of the eyes than the wandring of the desire, Eccl. 6. 9.* thy desires *wander* abroad to a roming company of wishes, but thou wilt not observe that which God gives thee to see; thus much of the third Objection, drawn from desire.

*The fourth Objection.*

*Thou resolvest and hast good purposes, but oh thou canst not perform them.*

I answer thee, do but consider what thy purpose is, and thou shalt see how thou art cozened; these purposes thou speak'st of are only *voluntates de futuro.* I will hereafter look

*to it better than I have done heretofore. Hereafter I wil, I suppose, that is hereafter I will ; alas, this will for hereafter is no will.*

First, because its only to shuffle off the willing for the present. Now the heart is unwilling to obey, and therefore it puts off the commandment to hereafter, not for any such desire that it hath to do it hereafter, but only because it is unwilling to do it for the present. Like a man that is unwilling to lend, I'll lend you hereafter, sayes he, *Say not unto thy neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou hast it by thee, Prov. 3. 28.* his purpose to lend him to morrow, was only because he would shuffle off the lending to day. And therefore this purpose of willing hereafter, is no will at all, but only to shuffle off the willing for the present. Thou hast the opportunity by thee, why dost thou not take it ? thou hast the temptation by thee, why dost thou not resist it ? dost thou say thou hast a will for hereafter ? that is but a gull, that thou may'st not will for the present.

Secondly, this will for hereafter is no will, because it goes without Gods, no will can go without God. Gods will is now, he would have thee now, and thou wilt not, thou wilt hereafter, but then may be he will not. He that will not when he may, when he would he shall have nay ; afterwards when thou wouldst faine be converted, and pardoned, &c. Lord open to me, nay, but O man, when I would, thou would'st not, now thou wouldst, but I will not, thy will is for hereafter goes, without Gods, and therefore 'tis no will.

Thirdly

*the grossest Self-murder.*

Thirdly, thy will for hereafter is no will, because thou shalt misse those suppositions that thou wilt upon.

First, thou supposest thou shalt have fewer temptations hereafter. O when these troubles are over, and these temptations are over, I will, nay, but O man, when these are all over, new ones will come. And if the temptations for the present be a hindrance, some temptation or other as bad thou shalt meet with, that shall hinder thee hereafter much more, and therefore this supposition is false.

Secondly, thou supposest thou shalt be fitter hereafter; but, *qui non est hodie cras minus aptus erit*, if thou beest not fit now, much lesse wilt thou be afterwards; thou'lt be unfitter and unfitter, like meat, the longer it is kept, the unfitter 'tis to be eaten, and therefore this supposition is false too.

Fourthly, thy will for hereafter is no will, but a mockery. *Antigonus, dabo, Antigonus, I will give*, this is not good in mens Laws, much lesse in Gods. *Dabo*, I will give; this is no gift, saies the Law. So *resipiscam*, I will repent; this is no repentance, saies God. Thus you see this Objection is nothing, never tell me of thy purposes, thy purposes are willings for hereafter, and they are no wils at all.

*The fifth Objection.*

§ Object.

*Thou endeavourest and labourst to serve God, answered and to be saved.*

*I answer thee, Alas, Is this to labour for grace,  
and*

## Wilful Impenitency

and for Heaven, when thou labourest so idly? as God said of that fasting; so may I say of thy labour, *Is this the fast that I have chosen? to afflict a mans self for a day?* So, is this the labour that I have chosen? To labour so as thou labourest? but I need not to insist on this plea, thy conscience is able to answer it. Thou labour? thy conscience knows well enough thou art lazy, thou dost not labour for holiness; so then thy *impenitency is wilful, and thy damnation wilful, and thy ruine wilful.*

To conclude then, understand all you that will not hear and obey.

First, that your *destruction is from self*, you cannot cast it upon God; he offers you the means to escape it, and you will not, *Hos. 13. 9.*

Secondly, your *destruction is most just*, you cannot allege severity and cruelty; no; your selves are cruel ones. You judge your own selves unto Hell. The Lord *presseth the Gospel* of grace upon you, & you *put it off*, *Act. 13. 46.*

Thirdly, your *destruction is inexcusable*, you having nothing to excuse you: God hath taken away all clokes of excuses, he hath offered you *saving knowledge*, and you *would not*; a *Christ*, and ye *would not*: good motions, counsels, threatenings, and you *would not*. Your mouthes are quite stopped when you perish, *Matth. 22. 12.*

Fourthly, your *destruction is unavoidable*; if you would have relented and yielded, there might have been hope, but you would not. You have *hardned your necks*, and what's that but a *will not*? Therefore you shall be *destroyed without remedy*, *Prov. 29. 1.*

Fifth-

Fifthly, your destruction is pittiless; what eye can pity you? *Will will have will, though Will will have woe*, as we say, not God, nor Angels, nor Saints, no eye can pity you. If the thief will steal, and will to the Gallows, let him go: he is no object of pity: as we say of a wilful man, no tale can tune him to take heed, so no means can tune you to take heed; and therefore when you rue it, you cannot be pittied.

Sixthly, your *destruction is grievous*; of all plagues, none will fret more than those which one hath wilfully pull'd on himself. You'll one day gnash your own teeth, *curse your own wils*, ban your own hearts; woe is me, I am under the rod, and myself gathered it; in *Hell*, and my self kindled it. I might have prevented it, but I would not.

*Now follows the Application.*

Learn instruction then, lest ye perish wil-<sup>Use I.</sup>fully; reform as much as you may, down with all your disorders, stumbling *blocks of iniquities*, and all the *Idols of your hearts*, and cast them into the *brook Kidron*, Set up good courses as much as you may, use all the means to salvation as humbly as you may; let not any Family be without the due worship of God in it. Fathers, suffer not sin on your children, nor Masters on your servants, lie not, swear not, covet not, omit not the exercises of hope, lest yee justly, inexcusably, unavoydably, pittilessly perish, and so *reproach your own wills for ever in Tophet*; as *David* then said

said unto *Salomon*, after he had set him busi-  
nesses to do, *arise therefore and be doing, and the*  
*Lord be with thee*, saies he, *1 Chron. 22. 16.* So I  
may say to you, *Arise and be doing*; up, set a-  
bout it, use no excuses, humble your selves be-  
fore God, see your misery and bewail it, and  
the Lord be with you.

**B**ut may be you will say, this Doctrine is  
*Pelagianism*, or *Armenianism* at least. Nay  
then, let me tell you, 'tis *Arminianism* to hold  
the contrary. You make your wils to be your  
own, & free for to will, that say your will is to  
repent, but you cannot. And if God should  
give you a *posse*, ye profess your selves to be of  
the *Pelagian Heresie*; if God should give you  
a power you would add the will. To passe o-  
ver this, and so to go on.

Except the belief of this truth do sink into  
thy heart, thou canst never soundly be hum-  
bled; if thou shouldst say, Lord, I would fain  
have repented all this while, but I could not,  
thou never soundly wert humbled: a man is  
never humbled as long as he excuses himself:  
thou sayest I would be holier, I would pray  
better, and I would reform more, but I can-  
not; this is to fall to excuses, and not to be  
humbled: For,

First, thou excuseth thy self for all transgres-  
sions besides original. A man must be hum-  
bled for his actual sins as well as original, and  
count himself inexcusable for one as well  
as tother. But thou pitchest all thy humilia-  
tion

tion upon thy Apostacy in *Adam*, if now thou pleadest a cannot. Lord, I confesse I was conceived in sin, but now I cannot do withall; I cannot do otherwise though I would never so fain. I cannot but drink now and then and be drunk, I cannot but rap out an Oath now and then in my haste, &c. I confess I brought this cannot upon me in the loyns of *Adam*; but upon the supposal of that, doest thou bid me give over my sins? I cannot; this is not to be humbled, but to fall to excuses. Its true, actual corruption which naturally flowes from original, requires one and the self same humiliation that original does. But otherwise thou must be humble with a new humiliation for thine actual transgressions, or, else thou art not humbled, but pleadest excuses. *David* humbles himself for both, with one humiliation for the one, *Psa.* 51. 5. with another for the other, *v.* 3. But as long as thou pleadest on this fashion, thou excusest thy self for thy actual sins, and never art humbled.

Nay secondly thou excusest thy self for thy <sup>2</sup>*Excuse* original sin too. Lord, I would be without sin, but I cannot, I would if I could; belike then if it had been thy case as it was *Adams*, thou wouldst not have eaten of the forbidden fruit. And therefore it was his fault and not thine, thou wouldst not have sinned if thou couldest have otherwise chused. And therefore thou excusest thy self for that too; for thou sayest thou wouldst not have sinned if thou hadst been as he; he sinned when he might have  
H otherwise

otherwise chused; but thou wouldst not have done so. Thus thou excuseth thy self for thine original sin too; And therefore thou canst not be humbled, as long as thou pleadst thus; the truth is, thou didst willingly sin as well as *Adam*. *God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.* Eccles. 7. 29. He speaketh of *Adams* being upright; God made *Adam* upright: he does not say, but man hath found out many inventions, as though it were his fault alone that was created upright. No, God made man upright, but they, mark, he casts the blame upon every man as well as *Adam*. But they have sought out many inventions. Thus we must be humbled for our original corruption: but thou canst not be humbled as long as thou pleadst on this manner: no, thou excuseth thy self, and therefore thou wert never yet humbled:

Note.

3 *Excuse* Nay Thirdly, thou excuseth thy self for every sin, thou makest all thy sins to be nothing but infirmities, as though *Pauls* case were thine: the good which I would do, that do I not, and the evil which I would not do, that do I. I would be godlier than I am, but I cannot: And therefore thou makest all thy sins to be infirmities. What is a sin of infirmity but a sin the will protesteth against? thou saiest that thy will protesteth against every of thy sins, thou wouldst leave them, but thou canst not. See then how far thou art from sound Humiliation: thy presumptuous sins are all nothing with thee, thy stubbornnesse nothing, and thy wilfulnesse nothing.

Sin of infirmity.

thing, no all thy sins are Infirmities. Nay thou makest thy sins to be purely and only infirmities, invincible infirmities: invincible infirmities are the most excusable of all. Now when thou saiest thou stickest at a Cannot, thou makest thy sin, not only infirmities, but also invincible infirmities, such as thou canst not possibly avoid, thou wouldest fain avoid them, but thou canst not: and therefore if thou goest this way to work thou canst never be humbled.

Nay Fourthly, Thou commendest thy self more than God: nay if ever God should inable thee and give thee power to be a new creature, thou makest thy self more beholding to thy self than to God. The will is more than the power: the will to believe, and repent, and convert, is more than the power: *Actus secundus est nobilior actu primo.* To be able to believe, and to be able to repent, and become a new Creature, these are but first acts. If God would help thee to these, thou saiest thou wouldest add tother. Thou wouldest believe and thou wouldest convert, and thou wouldest be a new Creature: if God would give thee the power, thou wouldest add the act. And therefore thou commendest thy self more than God: for in moral powers which have a further reference unto act, the act is more noble than the power. The truth is, the will is better than the power of doing: and both is of God, so the Apostle does shew it. Its God that worketh in you, speaking of the Saints: *It is God that worketh in you both the will and the deed.*

Note:

deed, Phil. 1. 13. Mark, the will and the deed. First the will, and then power to bring it into deed; the will is the primary blessing of God. And this is the reason why a child of Gods estate is now better under Christ, than it was before in innocency, for then he had only power if he would; and now both the will and the deed. I say this is the truth, the will is more than the power; & therefore thou wert never humbled in thy self, that pleadest, O I would, if I could; thou makest thy self more beholding to self than to God, if God should ever convert thee, and therefore thou art yet not capable of conversion; why? thou art not yet humbled, but standst at proud terms with the Lord.

5 Excuse

Apud Cas-  
sanderum  
Domine duc  
me quo non  
queo.

Nay Fifthly, thou canst not so much as pray to God for a will, thou art so proud, that thou art conceited thou hast that already. I have a good will to be good as any body else, but I cannot possibly do as I would; so that all thy prayers to God are a mockery. The godly humble soul prayes as the antient Church used to pray; *Lord give me a will to be good which my will is set against.* But thou canst not pray so, thou art a richer Begger than so; for thou hast a good will already, thou thinkest. A Man cannot pray for a thing the lack whereof he is not sensible thereof: *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God,* James 1. 5. He cannot pray for a thing if he do not think that he lacks it: Nor thou for a will, for as thou doest not think that thou lackest it, so a Nay if God should convert thee thou canst not give him thanks for converting thee: for

thy

thy will needed none: may be thou wilt pray for possibilities till thou hast them; and give him thanks for possibilities when thou hast them, but thou canst not pray for a will, for thou thinkest thou hast it; nor give him thanks for thy will, for that is thine own. So that thou art devilishly proud, never humbled since thou wert born. Nay thou art so proud that all thy prayers are but mockeries, and thy giving of thanks is a mockery. How canst thou look that God should convert thee, when as thy proud heart tells God before hand, thou wouldst not thank him if he should?

Nay Sixthly, Thou casteth all the blame upon God; for it even just as if thou shouldst say, I cannot help it if God be not pleased to inable me, how can I help it? my will is as good as anothers, such as are so forward and so Heavenly, God gives them the power; but my will God knowes is as good as theirs, I would fain do as well as the best, but I cannot; O if God would inable me, I would. O Beloved, take heed of these conceits, for ye cast all the blame upon God; where as the blame is in your selves, ye would not be inabled. I say ye cast all the blame upon God.

*6 Excuse*

*Carnal men excuse themselves, and cast the blame upon God.*

First, Because ye cast the blame upon Nature, it is my Nature, and I cannot: I would, but it is my Nature and I cannot. Thou layest the blame upon thy Nature, and therefore thou casteth the blame upon God for not helping thee to a better Nature: it is God that justly determines Mens Natures, Ones Nature is more cho-

*1 Demon*

lerick, anothers more fearful, anothers more lazy, anothers more lustful. Dost thou lay the blame upon Nature, my Nature is more subject to Choler, and Wrath? Alas, thou laiest blame upon God. For its he that disposeth of Mens Natures: and therefore thou takest part with those Wretches that said, *why hast thou made me thus?* Romans 9.20. Thou laiest the blame upon God, I would not do thus, but onely 'tis my Nature, and I cannot help it. No. And wilt thou lay the blame upon God? No, no: This is thy Nature, and thou art contented with this nature

**2<sup>d</sup> Demon.** Secondly, Thou dost cast the blame upon Temptations, it is my hard hap to fall upon Temptations. I was tempted, or I would not have done it: this is to cast the blame upon God too, for it is his Providence to order temptations. Such and such temptations for one Man, such and such for another, such now and such then. Its the Providence of God that disposeth which and which temptations every Man shall have. One shall have temptations to Pride, another temptations to Wrath, another to Revenge, another to Covetousnesse. Its true: God tempteth no Man, but he orders the temptations of men. *Let no Man say he is tempted of God, for God tempteth no man.* No, every Man is tempted to sinn by his own lusts. Thus thou wouldst say if thou wert humbled: but thou layest the blame upon God: it was long of temptions that I did it. This is if thou shouldst say, 'twas long of God, that

**Jam. 1. 13.**

that I did it, because 'twas Gods Providence that suffered these Temptations to be laid for thee.

Thirdly, because thou layest the blame upon <sup>3</sup> *Demon.* the times, the times are very hard. I would not go in this Fashion, but onely that the times require it. I would be more given to Fasting and repeating the Word, &c. I would willingly be more forward than I am, but the times are very bad; This is to lay the blame upon God, for God setteth every Man his time. If I had been in Christs time, or *Pauls* time, or Queen *Elizabeths* time, I would have done thus and thus. Thou laiest the blame upon God, for God setteth every Man his time; When God from eternity made his common-place-Book of all the whole World, he appointed such and such to live first, such next, and such last; Such and such to live here, and such there; Such at *Rochford*, and such at *London*; so saies the Apostle, *He hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations, Acts 17. 26.* Mark, he hath appointed the times, and the places. The times when they shall live, and the places where. God setteth mens times; and therefore thou which laiest the blame upon the times, laiest the blame upon God.

Fourthly, because thou laiest the blame up- <sup>4</sup> *Demon.* on this Commandement, if it were any Commandement but this, I would do it; But this I cannot do; if it were any other injury but

this, any disgrace but this I would willingly put it up, but I cannot put up this; if it were any duty but this; I would do any thing but this, but to root out all Disorders out of my House, alas I cannot do this, I cannot live, as good keep no Inn at all, as not suffer men to call for what they would, I cannot do this; this is to cast the blame upon God too, that he should make such a Commandement as this, he should have done well to have made another Law, and penned another Gospel, and then I would have kept it: thou layest the blame upon God, for it is God that made all these Commandements, these are the Commandements of the Lord, *Deuteronomy 6.1. The Lord made all the Commandements*, and this too, and therefore if thou laiest the blame upon this, thou layest the blame upon God.

5 *Demon.* Fifthly, because thou laiest the blame upon ill fortune or bad luck, It was my ill fortune to marry a Shrew, and I cannot but fret and lie out of doors. Alas, Mariages are made in Heaven, and God hath decreed them; thus thou laiest the blame upon God: 'twas my ill fortune to miscarry, to light upon such a Companion, to be so over-taken as I was, I would willingly have had it to have been otherwise, but I had not the luck of it; and it fell out very unluckily; thus thou committest two evils, thou playest the Atheist in speaking of fortune, like them in the Prophet that prepared a *table for fortune*, as the word signifies, *Esay. 65.11. I say, thou committest two evils, one in calling it Fortune; the other thou layest the blame upon*  
God,

Note.

God, for that which thou profanely callest That Fortune and luck, its *ἡδὴν τὴν καὶ ἡσυχίαν ὡς ποτὶ* which sayes *Aristotle*, the very Heathen is able to tell men call it is God, and the Scripture puts it for Gods Fortune is Gods Providence; and therefore when thou layest the blame upon ill Fortune, thou layest the blame upon God; so that hence we may see, that thou canst never be humbled as long as thou pleadest on this wise before God. I would very willingly, but I cannot: I say, thou canst never be humbled, because this is to lay the blame upon God. Indeed a Child of God, that of unwilling is made willing, he may plead a *cannot* before Christ without laying the blame upon God. Lord, I cannot humble my proud heart, nor crucifie this bewitching lust of mine, Lord I am not able to do it, I beseech thee to help me. I say a child of God that is sincerely willing to do it, may plead a *cannot* before Christ; nay Christ, his promise can no where be applied, but where the soul can truly plead a *cannot*. He giveth power to the faint, to him that hath no might I will encrease strength, *Esay 40. 29.* When the Soul lies tugging and pulling at his heart, and cannot pull it up, striving and endeavouring, and using all holy means and cannot, its even faint with pulling and tugging at that which it cannot. As we know twill make any Man faint to be tugging at a Millstone, which he cannot pull up. When the Soul lies thus at a cannot, I will give power, sayes Christ, though it have no strength, I will enable it, a Child of God that is willing, may plead a *cannot*, without laying the blame upon God, but then

then he humbles his soul for his former wilnots, nay for his too too many will nots for the present. But thou canst never be humbled while thou livest, if thou pleadest thus a cannot, because thou layest the blame upon God.

Nay Sixthly, thou canst not be humbled because thou dost not only lay the blame upon God for thy sins, but thou findest fault with all Gods proceedings; it is as if thou shouldest say, why does he bid me Repent, when he knowes I cannot? why does he yet complain? *Romans 9. 19.* he knowes I cannot; why does he woo me to do that which I cannot? or promise me blessings if I do, when he knowes that I cannot? why does he help me to more and more knowledge? he does but hurt me with knowledge, and make my sins to be worse, which I cannot forsake. My sins are now against knowledge, and Ministers tell me that is worse; this is all that I get by your preaching; nay thou findest fault with all Gods Correction: why does he punish me for not doing of that which I cannot? thus thou art far from being humbled: the truth is, thou mightest get a great deal by knowlege, by exhortation, and reproofs, and corrections, but thou wilt not: is it not easier to leave a sin when thou knowest it, than when thou art ignorant of it? to be moved when thou art exhorted, than when thou art not admonished at all? to forsake a sinful course when once God hath imbittered it to thy flesh by corrections, than when it was sweet? is it not easier to give over Drunkenesse, when thy ex-  
cess

celle is bitter to thy stomack, than when it was pleasant? so it is with every other sinn, thou mightst get a great deal of good by every one of Gods dealings, but thou wilt not. *Why should you be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more, Esay 1.5.* Ye will sayes God, this is Gods language, he findes fault with thy Will, but thou findest fault with his Will; Why does he smite me more and more? I cannot but revolt, I cannot do as he would have me; may be thy lusts are more mannerly than to say thus; but this secret grumbling is in thee, if thou sayest that thou sittest at a cannot, and therefore thou canst not be humbled.

In the second place, if it be thus, the reason why thou dost not amend, is not because thou canst not, but because thou wilt not.

*Use 2.*  
Which  
discove  
the hea  
deceitf  
ness.

*See here then the deceit of thy heart.*

If God would give me Grace, I would willingly do any thing; this is nothing but the deceitfulness of thy heart, which is deceitful above all things. For thy heart does but here lie unto God; I would very fain, if God would inable me; thou liest; God knowes it is not so: Like the wilful Jewes, they would be Gods People, they would stay themselves upon God; God tells them in effect they lied, *I knew thou wert obstinate, and thy neck is an Iron sinew, and thy brow Brasse, Isay 48.4.* Wouldst thou believe me? No, no, I know thou art obstinate and will not; so God knowes thou art obstinate, I cannot see this is a sin to say faith and

*Jer. 17. 9.*

and truth, I cannot see 'tis a sin not to pray daily in my Family, not to repeat the Sermon every Sabbath: if I could see it were a sin, I would mend it; no, no, thou liest unto God, thou art obstinate, and thou wouldst not have it a sin, and thou wilt not believe it, and if thou didst know it to be one, thou wouldst not reform it.

Secondly, Hereby thou dodgest with God, and thou temptest the Lord. If God would give me grace, I would do it; this is nothing but dallying and trifling with the Lord; for why dost thou not set about it, and try every Day what thou canst do? if God would but quicken me, and perswade me, and compel me, and enable me, I would do it. Alas thou dodgest with God, as the people in the Gospel, *if he will come down from the Crosse, we will believe in him*, Mat. 27.42. They had no will to believe in him, this was nothing but dodging: *Christ* had done enough for them to make them believe, if they had any such will, and this was nothing but a pretence of their deceitful heart.

Thirdly, Hereby thou shufflest off the Word, when thou hast heard it, God give me grace to do so as he hath taught me this day; alas I cannot my self, God give me grace, and so shufflest it off, and thinkest no more of it: like (those you call) *God-fathers* in some places, as soon as ever they are charged at the Font to look to the Child, and see him brought up in Religion, they presently go and put off the charge on the Father, I pray you take the charge upon you: so thou layest the charge at Gods  
door,

door, when God gives thee any duty in charge, thou layest it at his door, as though it stuck there, and there thou lettest it lie, not setting about it to do it: God give me grace, repentance is his gift, and if he do not give it, I cannot repent, I would, but I cannot, if he do not give it: the speech is very good, and becomes a godly soul that makes Conscience of the means to say it, but this is thy shuffling to lay it at Gods door, as though it stuck there; God tells thee plainly, it does not stick at him, he would have all to come unto Repentance, 2 Peter 3. 9. But thou wilt not come, and this is the deceit of thy Heart to shuffle it from thee.

In the third place, is it so, that the reason why thou dost not amend, 's not because thou canst not, but only because thou wilt not?

*Oh then my Brethren learn to be humbled.*

This point calls for humiliation.

First, Here lies especially the pride of the Heart, not in Mens *Cannots*, but their *Will nots*, when a Soul does whatsoever it can, reforms as much as it can, uses as many means as it can, and as often as it can, this is not a proud heart, but a *proud* heart is that especially which sticketh at a will not. If ye will not hear, my Soul shall weep in secret places for your Pride? Jer. 13. 17. Mark, for your Pride, if you *wile not*; he does not say, if you cannot, my Soul shall weep for your Pride, if ye stick at a cannot

*Use 3.  
Engage  
to humili-  
ation.*

not, but if ye stick at a will not, do not think this point does lift up mens wills, no, this poynt does as much beat at the humbling of the will, any poynt under Heaven, for here lies the pride as of the will, and therefore here ye must be humbled.

Secondly, here lies especially the hardning of the heart: when a Man sticks at a cannot, he does not more and more harden his heart, but onely sticks at the same hardnesse he had. Beloved, *Thou dost then harden thy heart when thou wilt not obey*, and therefore here's most need of thy humbling, to be humbled for thy wil-nots; its said of *Pharaoh*, he *hardned his heart*, *Exod. 9. 34.* What followes? *he would not let the children of Israel goe*: thy will nots these are they that harden thy heart: dost thou complain of the hardnesse of thy heart? O go and humble thy Soul for thy will nots, these are the hardners of thy heart, nay let me tell thee, thou hast no hardnesse of heart no more than an Infant or a Babe, but only that which thy will nots have made thee, and therefore thou hast great reason to be humbled for thy will nots.

Thirdly, here lies especially the stubbornnesse of thy heart; when a child that is commanded by his Parents to obey, sticks at a cannot he obeyes as far as he can, but onely he sticks at a cannot, he is not stubborn; stubbornnesse is when one sticks at a will not: if a man have a stubborn Son which will not obey the voice of his Father, *Deut. 21. 18.* So here lies especially the

the stubbornnesse of thy heart, and therefore heres most humiliation required.

Fourthly, here lies the greatest *despisings* of the *Commandement* of God; authority is never so much despised as when men will not submit to it: a Father is despised when a Son will not hear him; and a Master is despised when his servant will not do as he bids him; nay commandement cannot be despised but by will-nots, it may be omitted, and not obeyed by cannots, but it cannot be despised but by will-nots, if ye shall *despise my statutes*, so that ye will not do all my *Commandements*, &c. *Levit. 26. 15.* O what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled, that despisest the Lord? He cannot endure that men should despise him; he can put up any other wrong rather than this, that men should despise him: but to be slighted and despised he will not, cannot endure it. *For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the Law of the Lord, Amos 2. 4.* he will not turn away the punishment of this sin, when men do despise him; what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled under thy will not, thou despisest the Commandement?

Here's a word to you that are Godly; O what <sup>4 Use.</sup> mercy hath the Lord shewed to you, and how <sup>To quick-</sup> ought you to be thankfull! never was there <sup>en the</sup> such mercy as this to shew mercy to the vvilful; <sup>thankful</sup> O vvofull Soul, be his misery never so great, <sup>ness of</sup> he is not the fit object of mercy: for though <sup>the godly</sup> misery be mercies object, yet joyn'd vvith vvil- <sup>Note.</sup> fulnes

fulnesse its not to be pittied ; you have been as  
 vvilfull as any, all cut out of the same rock ; the  
 Lord hath not only helpt you to mercy and  
 grace, but also to a will to take it. When *Lot*  
 was unwilling to go out of *Sodome*, the Lord  
 took him by the Arm, and carried him perforce;  
 now see how the Text expressees it : the  
*Angels took hold of his hand, the Lord being mer-*  
*cifull unto him, and they brought him forth,*  
*Gen. 19. 16.* As if he should say, would you  
 fain stay ? you shall nor; would you stand lin-  
 gering to be consumed with fire and brim-  
 stone ? you shall not; the Lord was mercifull to  
 him whether he would or no. So you had no  
 mercy on your selves, but the Lord had ; ye  
 were wilfull against mercie, and the Lord fast-  
 ned mercy on you, whether you would or no,  
 he commanded his loving kindness, *Psal. 42.*  
*8. Go mercy, and sei ze on them, go loving kind-*  
*nesse, and make them take ye, not as though*  
*God converted you against your wills : for*  
*when he converted you, your unwillingnesse*  
*was taken away ; but he made you of unwil-*  
*ling, willing.* Oh the infinite mercy of God,  
 and the infinite cause you have to be thank-  
 ful.

5. Use In the fifth place, to you that stand out in  
 A season- your wilfulness still ; is it so that ye stick  
 able Item at a will not ? then be exhorted to be much in  
 to all re- abasing your selves before the Lord : your  
 bellious stoutness is intollerable, that you dare set up  
 Spirits. the briars and thorns against God in battel ;  
 down with them and be wise : you harden your  
 own

own hearts, and disable your selves more and more for repenting of it; ye despise the Lords name by the stubbornnesse of your froward will, you can never be saved except your wills stoop: before *Christ will meddle with a Soul, bee'l first ask, art thou willing?* as he asked the blind man, *what wilt thou that I do unto thee?* Lord saies he, that I may receive my sight, *Luk. 18. 41.* So the first question he puts to thee is, what wilt thou? Lord that I may be humble, *Psal. 81. 11.* converted, purged: if thou bee'st wilfull, though he never take thee in hand, but leave thee to thy self, he will be Justified in thine eternal confusion.

First, Is it not enough that thou hast willingly fallen in *Adam*, but thou must willingly stand out again? God now calls thee to means of grace, thou hast stood out once already, and wilt thou be willfull to stand out again? as *Israel*, though in a mistake said to their brethren, is the iniquity of *Peor* too little for us; from the which we are not cleansed to this day? but *that ye must turn away this day too?* *Josh. 22. 17.* So may I say, is your vvilling Apostacy in *Adam* too little for you, from the vvich ye are not cleansed to this day, but ye must vvillingly stand out against Christ too?

Secondly, consider, the very Saints of God that have not half so many vvill-nots as you, that stick more truly at a cannot; I vvould do the good but I cannot. I say the very Saints of God they labour to humble themselves every day: *O wretched man that I am, sayes Paul, Rom. 7. 24.* does *Paul* cry out, Oh vvretched man

that I am? he was a Saint of God, and heir of heaven, and sure of blisse; does he cry out of himself, that he was wretched? oh what infinite need then hast thou to be humbled! Thou art yet a child of hell, and heir of damnation, wilfull in thy sins to this hour, *Oh, wretched man that I am!*

Thirdly, consider the more shamefull ones sin is, the more reason to be humbled; thy sin is most shamefull; for thou corruptest thy self, *they have corrupted themselves*, Deut. 32. 5. so thou corruptest thy self, thy will corrupteth it self.

Nay fourthly consider, there's no greater shame than to make away ones self; thou destroyest thy self; *Oh Israel thou destroyest thy self*. More credit to be stab'd by the high way, nay more credit to be hanged on a *Patibulum* as a *Malefactor*, than to murder ones self. Put him into a hole, drive a stake through his body, set a Monument of shame on him. (I do not know whether it be so among you, but) it is in some places, when a man murders himself. So thou dost murder thy self, nay more, thy best self; thou makest away thy Soul. Be vext then with thy wicked will, what a mad man am I? I will have this lust, and I will have that passion, like the people, we will have a King over us; no, sayes *Samuel*, the Lord your God is your King; nay, but we *will have a King*. So thou art wilfull, and thou wilt do thus; Oh do not do it, the Lord hath forbidden thee? Nay, but I will do it. Thus thou art wilfull, and thou wilt to Hell; ver-  
thine

Wilfull  
disobedi-  
ence is  
soul-mur-  
der.

1 Sam. 12.  
11.

thine own heart with this. When a *wilful Malefactor* comes afterwards to know that if he had not been wilful the Judge would have saved him, Oh how will it vex him ! he could even rend his own hair, and tear his own flesh; what a mad man was I ! I forsook mine own Clergy; so thou forsakest thine own Clergy, thine own mercy, *they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy, Jonah 2. 8.* vex thine own heart with it, say, I have forsaken mine own mercy.

Fifthly, consider, if you would but vex your own souls with this serious consideration, it would make you kick your lusts under foot, and cry out upon them, out upon you, get yee hence, as they cried out upon their Idols, *Esay 30. 22.* get ye hence, get ye hence, here is no entertainment for you from henceforth. I forsake mine own mercy as long as I keep you.

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*Having shewed you, that except your belief of this point be rooted in your hearts, ye can never be humbled :*

**F**irst, because hereby you excuse your selves from all your transgressions besides original.

Nay secondly, ye excuse your selves for your original sin too.

Nay thirdly, you make all your sins to be nothing but infirmities, invincible infirmities.

Nay fourthly, you commend your selves more than God.

Nay fifthly, you block up the way to the throne of grace.

Nay sixthly, you cast all the blame upon God.

First, because you lay the blame upon nature.

Secondly, because you cast the blame on temptations.

Thirdly, because you lay the blame on the times.

Fourthly, because you lay the blame upon the Commandement.

Nay seventhly, you find fault with all the dealings of God.

Oh take heed then of these base pleas and pretences: For,

That I may interpose four or five particulars unnamed.

First, this same pleading is the cause why you are lazie and idle in the use of means; namely, because we suffer our hearts to plead, Oh we cannot do thus; we cannot beat down this evil? why did the unjust Steward refuse honest labour to work for his living? *I cannot dig*, saies he, *Luke 16. 3.* therefore he refused to labour; so this is the cause why ye pray no more, and reform no more, &c. Ye set your hearts thus to plead, *I cannot do it*: This is the reason why ye are backward to labour; how know ye what may be done if ye would buckle to labour? but alas, *I cannot do it*, say you, and therefore ye are dead and dull, and sluggish to every good Ordinance. Shake off these *lazy-hearted pleas*, otherwise yee'l never buckle to labour.

Secondly,

Secondly, this same pleading brings up an ill report upon piety and godliness; generally men think Religion is so irksome, and Holiness is impossible. We cannot be Saints, and we are not able to be so holy; these pleas bring an evill report on Religion. Like the Spies that brought an evil report upon *Canaan*. *Num. 13. 23.* What saies the Text in the verse going before? we be not able to get it, say they, v. 31. this made the rest of the people think hardly of their going into *Canaan*: they generally thought it was to very little end, Oh they were not able to win it: so ye bring an evill report upon the *Heavenly Canaan*, the flesh is too strong, the devill too strong, temptations too strong, and its impossible to grapple with them all, we are not able to get mastery. I say this brings up an evil report on Religion, ye discourage one another. I cannot get quickning, and I cannot deny my self. Yee bring up an evill report upon these duties, and ye are guilty of the evill repott that goes up and down.

Thirdly, this same pleading is a murmuring against God, *q. d.* Why does God give me such Commandements that I cannot observe? Why does he charge me to root out a lust that I cannot root out? this is to murmur against God, Like those *murmuring Disciples*, in the Gospel, when they were told they must feed upon Christ, and as the *body* feeds upon *meat*, so your souls must feed upon Christ; this is a hard saying, who can hear it, say they? Christ construed this speech to be *murmuring*, *Joh. 6.*

60, 61. We cannot do this, and this is so hard we are not able to do it. The Text saies it was murmuring; *when Iesus knew in himself that his Disciples murmured at it*; that pleading of a cannot was a murmuring. So when thou grumblest on this manner, I cannot walk thus, I cannot believe thus, &c. this is to murmur against God, nay this will bring thee to Apostacy at last, if thou suffer thy heart to plead thus. May be now thou art a forward professor, yet beest thou never so forward and favourest any lust, and I cannot give it over, I cannot root it out, &c. I say this will break thy neck at the last, if thou dost not look to it. So it was with those forenamed Disciples, they were very forward Professors, for they were the Disciples of Christ, saies the Text; yet those Disciples, *they went away back and walked no more with Christ*, vers. 66. their pleadings of their cannots, drove them to Apostacy; they went away back. So thou wilt go away back, and fall into Apostacy if thou suffer thy heart to stand pleading of cannots in this manner.

Fourthly, this is the sawsiest excuse of all excuses, many sinners excuse their own selves, but there is more mannerliness in all their excuses: I pray thee have me excused, saies one, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I pray thee have me excused, saies the other, I have bought a purchase, I pray thee have me excused. These though wretched excusers and turned out from all mercy, yet they were somewhat more mannerly, but I cannot come saist thou, I have married a Wife, and I cannot come, Luke 14.

20. this is a most sawcy excuse, thou tellest Christ in plain terms, I cannot come, *q. d.* ye may even save your labour to invite, for this is short and long, as we say, I cannot come. This I put in only by the by.

I have shewed you some of the deceits of the heart in pleading these cannots.

First, how it lies unto God.

Secondly, how it dallies with God.

Thirdly, how hereby it puts off the word.

And then I shewed you the strong reason we have to be humbled under these wil-nots.

First because here chiefly *lies the pride of the heart, not in mens cannots, but in their wil-nots,* Jer. 13. 17.

Secondly here lies *chiefly the hardning of the heart,* Exod. 9. 34, 35.

Thirdly, here lies chiefly *the stubbornnesse of the heart,* Deut. 21. 18.

Fourthly, here lies chiefly *the great despising of the Commandements of God,* Levit. 26. 15.

Fifthly, now to go on, here lies the reason why Divines say that the conversion of a sinner is a harder work than the Creation of Heaven and Earth, for thus they do reason: when God created Heaven and Earth, he had nothing to resist him; as he had nothing to help him, (he made all of nothing) so he had nothing to resist him. There was but one difficulty in the Creation of Heaven and Earth; but in the conversion of a sinner there be two difficulties.

First, here is the same difficulty that was in creation, for God makes a Convert of nothing; he had nothing to help him, not one thought,

not one desire, not one good inclination : and therefore the Scripture calls it a new Creation: vvhosoever is in *Christ* is a new creature, 2 Cor. 5. 17. that is, created anew. And, therefore there vvas nothing præixistent, no not one thought, all the thoughts of men are only evil, and that continually. So there is the same difficulty that vvas in the creation of Heaven and earth: and then

Secondly, there is another difficulty more than there vvas in the creation : for as there vvas nothing præixistent to help, so there vvas nothing to resist. But here is something to resist, the Will it resisteth: now the cannot does not resist. No, the bestowing of the new powers is no more than another creation. But the changing of the will is more than another Creation, for the wil it resisteth, yea and it sets all the soul a resisting. Carnal reason resisteth, carnal desires they resist, all the soul it resisteth : and the greatest resistance of all is the resistance of the will : for the will is the utmost strength of the soul. And therefore here lies the infinite difficulty of the conversion of a sinner, namely in the turning of the will : it requireth more power, than was required to the creation of Heaven and Earth. God put himself forth more when he converteth a sinner, then when he created a World ; and therefore the Scripture calls the day of conversion of mens wils, the day of his power. Thy people shal be *willing in the day of thy power*, Psal. 110. 3. In the day of thy power, mark, its called a day of thy power, when he converteth

verteth a people to be willing. Why? because the will did resist him; nay God had his <sup>Note:</sup> own self to resist him, anger steps in his way to resist him, Convert him not Lord, his wilfulnesse hath anger'd thee; Justice steps in to resist him, save him not Lord, his sins have dishonoured thee. Nay he had his mercy to resist him: Mercy steps in, Lord he hath abused me, save him not. Indeed had a sinner yielded as soon as he sinned, mercie would not resist him; but mercie had been dealing with him, and he abused all mercie. And therefore he had mercie to resist, nay and wisdom one would think to resist too, what a wilfull fool? pittie him not Lord. There is no reason he should be pittied, if he will perish let him perish. I say in the conversion of a sinner, as there was nothing to assist him, so there was all to resist. The will does resist him, nay God had himself as I may so speak to resist him, yea, and mercy to resist him; it was not so in the creation of Heaven and Earth. The creature had never provoked God not to create it: but the sinner hath provoked God never to convert him, so that now God must have power over himself if he mean to convert him. Oh then what infinite reason hast thou to be humbled? thou resistest God, as *Stephen* told the Jewes, *you have alwaies resisted the Holy Ghost, Acts 7. 51.* so thou hast resisted Gods spirit; yea, thy will does resist him, and that is the strongest thing to resist in the world. His word comes to convert thee, and thou dost resist his motions, his mercies, his corrections,  
his

his ordinances and all holy means to convert thee, thou dost resist them; nay his Spirit condescendeth within, and thou dost resist him.

I gave you five things to consider, what it is to stick at your wil-nots. I beseech you consider yet farther.

First, if you will not, Gods Ministers have discharged their duties, and have left your blood on your own heads, they can go no farther if you will not; the Groom can but carry the Steed unto watering, as we say, if he will not drink he cannot help it; so they can't help it, your blood lies upon your own heads, they have discharged their duties. When *Abrahams* servant objected, and how if the woman will not? *Abraham* he answers, if the woman will not be willing, *then thou shalt be clear of my oath, Gen. 24. 8.* So Lord, how if they will not? may we say, nay if they will not, let them chuse, thou art clear; the Lord hath sworn us to preach and teach, and exhort, and reprove, and invite you to grace; but if we do so, and you will not, we can't help it, your blood is on your own heads; we have discharged our oath and our duty, we would be glad that you would; but if now you will not, we have discharged our duties. Nay,

Secondly, if you will not, the Gospel hath delivered its errand, ye are guilty of your own everlasting perdition; the Gospel hath delivered its message, and this is the message, *Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, Revel. 22. 17.* This message hath been delivered to you often; its the last exhortation in the whole

whose Bible : like one in the evening of the market, he is even about to take down his standing, I have told you my lowest price, if you will have it, take; if not, chuse, I must be gone. So this is the end of Gods book: as if he should say, I am even a closing up my book, speak quickly, if ye will, come, and welcome: but if not I am gone. If yet you will not, you will not submit: nay, but you will have your lusts, and your stomachs will not come down, you will not stir a jot beyond your painted civility and formality: you will not be more conscionable than you have been, not frequent holy duties more than you have done: nor get more holiness than you have done, then if Will will have will, Will must win wo. Nay,

Thirdly, if you will not, the blood of Jesus Christ hath done that it came for : it came to tender you mercy upon very easie terms, to offer you grace and pardon, and salvation and Heaven, and all upon very free cost. If you had rather that sin should be your master, than that Christ should be your master: if you will not hearken & obey, I say the blood of Christ hath done that which it came for; and your souls shall know ye shall be worse offered; you have knowledge of the truth, Christ hath offered you very fair, and you cannot but know it, and yet you will not submit to it; assure your selves you shall be worse offered: for next to your will nots, comes Christ leaving you desolate. As Christ told *Jerusalem*, *I would, but you would not*: what follows? Behold *your house is left unto you desolate*, *Mat. 23. 37, 38*. So Christ would  
and

and you would not ; he hath given you gracious offers, but you will not : therefore you may look to be worse offered, your souls to be desolate. Nay,

Fourthly, if you will not, ye murder your own souls : when a man hath murdered himself, the Coroner comes and he does sit on him, and he enquires, and he examines, and who hath murdered this man ? and when he finds that it was himself that did murder him, so he concludes, and that man is branded for murdering of himself ; so you murder your own souls. The *Jews* their souls were all murdered ; well, when the Coroner sate on them, he concluded they had murdered themselves, *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, Hos. 13. 9.* So if the Coroner sit on thee, its most certain he shall find thou hast murdered thine own self ; O what a company of you is there, your souls are quite murdered ; one in one sin, another in another ; who hath murdered these men ? not God, he was ready to help them : not the Minister, he did use all *means* to save them ; he hath not been wanting to teach them and exhort them. No, your own selves have murdered your selves ; you would be carnal, and you would be proud, and you would not lie down to the word : when the Coroner sits on you, he must necessarily conclude, you have murdered your selves ; your own wills have condemned you.

You remember what exhortations we gave you. As ever you regard mercy to humble your selves, we told you the first question  
Christ

Christ asks, is, if ye be willing, as he ask'd the blind man, *what wilt thou?* Luk. 18. 41. if thou beest not willing, hee'll never take thee in hand : the subjects of the kingdom of grace must be willing. Christ will never come into a soul, where his will may be affronted by another ; Heaven cannot bear two Suns, nor one heart two wills ; if thy will be not crucified, and made agreeable to Christs, Christ cannot dwell in thy heart ; there would be two contrary wills in one heart : and this cannot be : if Christ come, he will have these and these lusts turned away, which thou wouldst fain keep ; he will have this done and that done, and thou wilt not : two contrary wills can never stand together. No, if thy will be contrary to Christ, Christs will will be contrary to thine : if thy will be to do that which will offend him, his Will will be to do that which will vex thee : *If ye will walk contrary to me, I will also walk contrary to you,* Levit. 26. 23, 24. No, no, your wills they must bow, or Christ will not take you in hand : the will is the general supposition of all the whole Gospel : the sum of the whole Gospel is this, to deny a mans self and to take up Christs Crosse and so follow him : now see the will is presupposed as ready: if any man will come after me, let him deny himself. &c, Luk. 9. 23. ne'r a Commandment of the Gospel, ne'r a promise, ne'r a one passage but presupposes the Will : Christ will not open his mouth except thy will be brought down.

*Celum non patitur duos soles.*

A few

An awak-  
ning him,  
for the re-  
deemed  
of the  
Lord.

A few words to you that are the redeemed of the Lord, and so I'll make a conclusion of all. I pray God smite home this point into your hearts; for though your wills be tamed and subdued in regard of the wicked, you do not stand out as they do, nevertheless observe you this point: there's many a Canaanite that remains still in our bosoms, that we may thank our own wills for not rooting out. We do not put our selves forth so much as we might, nor labour in the Lord so seriously as we might, nor walk so close as we might: Oh beloved these these same will nots do us all the mischief that ever is done us. For

Note.

First, We never sin against Gospel, but only upon will-nots: indeed we sin against the law in every of our cannots, but we never sin against the Gospel, but only in our will-nots. The Gospel requires nothing of a believer, but that which is given him, and therefore we never sin against the Gospel, but only in our *wil nots*: this is the voice of the Gospel *ἐὰν τις θέλῃ* if any man wil, *John 7. 17*. Oh then let us stir up our selves, shall we sin against gospel, and be angry against mercy?

Secondly, we can never displease God, but only upon *wil-nots*. I speak only upon Gods people: we can never stain our acceptance with God, but only in our wilnots, though we cannot but sin in our prayers, but sin in our duties, but sin in every thing that we do: yet this does not stain our acceptance with God, nor blemish it one whit, when God hath *our wills*: for if there be a vvoling mind, it is accepted

accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which a man hath not, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But when God would have us mend this, and we wil not, and reform that, and we wil not, we let security and sloth break into our wils; here, and here only do we displease our good God; this is a main thing to consider; is there but one thing wherein we may displease God, and shall we not take heed of that!

Thirdly, Conscience can never condemn us but only upon *wil nots*, when a child of God sins, and he cannot otherwise choose, his conscience can never condemn him. A child of Gods *cannots*, be they never so many, nay if they were millions more than they are, they never hinder sincerity; sincerity is rooted only in the wil, it is our *wil not* that is the breach of sincerity, and therefore here only the conscience condemns; does our conscience reproach us in our waies? let us thank our *wil-nots* for this: have we little peace? it is because of the *rebellion of our wil nots*. Ah, ah, this is an infinite evil, for it hinders our comforts, it hinders our boldnesse of accessse to the Throne of grace, it hinders our patience, and every good duty, this does us infinite hurt, it stabs to the heart, and wounds our very soul, when our conscience affordeth little peace, O it hinders very grievously, all this is long of our *will-nots*, because we will not be so carefull and so circumspect as we might.

Fourthly, God can never be so angry with us but only upon *wil-nots*: its true as long as a  
man

man is not in Christ, all the score stands, and God is angry for all; but God is angry for no thing but will-nots in his children, as *Nehemiah* saies of God speople in *Judah*, they would not bear, therefore God gave them up into the hand of the people of the land, *Nehem. 9.30*. God is not angry with his people for cannots, but only for their will-nots; it is our will-nots that God does not so go out with our Ministers, nor so quicken his word to your hearts. It is for our will-nots that he threatens our land, and begins to abridge us of our spiritual food, and shewes ominous signes of his departing away from us, and are we not even sick unto death for these will-nots? We complain of our deadensse, and what trow we is the cause, but our will-nots? We complain of our corruptions, and of the leanness of our souls, and whom may we thank, but our will-nots? we might grow more than we do, what lets us but our will-nots? What makes some of us go down the winde? as we say, but because we will not stand on our guards? These, these, brethren, these will-nots of ours, are the reason why God is provoked against us. O let us put forth our selves, and shake of these will-nots, lest anger break out, and there be no remedy for ones crooked servant to be stubborn, it is but his kinde; but for ones child to be stubborn, this angers the father indeed.

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